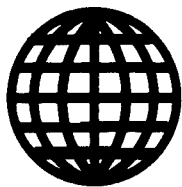


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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Future of Islamist Movements Examined

92AF1203 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
12 Aug 92 pp 20-28

[Article by Salah-al-Din al-Jawrashi]

[Text] Most reports, studies, and press articles written about the Arab Maghreb in recent years agree on two extremely important issues: viewing the economic condition as the main gap in the current situation of the Maghreb societies and speculating on the growth of the politically oriented Islamist movements in the remaining part of the 20th century.

Most literature of the period believes that the worsening economic problems and the inability of the successive governments of the Arab Maghreb countries to confront the political and social complications of these problems is what nurtures the so-called "fundamentalist movements" and provides them with the appropriate background to proliferate.

This analysis and expectation persists despite the retreat, at least outwardly, of these movements in most Arab Maghreb countries. In Libya, neither the Muslim Brotherhood nor the tendencies that have tried to inherit it have been able to take the initiative at home, despite repeated peaceful and violent endeavors. Even under the umbrella of the current crisis, the opposition, centered in Europe, has not been able to apply new pressures at the national level. In its current security and political battle, the government in Tunisia has been able to paralyze the effective organization of Ennahda Movement. The government is about to try this movement's leaders under general conditions characterized by stability and continuity. Even though the condition in Algeria is one of the more complex in the region and despite the big gaps created by the assassination of Mohamed Boudiaf, most observers have recorded political and popular retreat for the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], which was within a hairsbreadth of establishing an Islamic state. With his well-known political skill, the Moroccan monarch continues to control the political game and is trying to contain the Islamist phenomenon that has been growing numerically year after year. Even though Mauritania has witnessed an interesting upsurge in the proliferation of the literature of politicized Islamist movements in recent years, the movement's factions and organizational structure have not yet developed to the degree that enables the movement to pose a threat to the current balance of forces, especially since all of the political parties and organizations refrained from taking part in the latest legislative and presidential elections, which has prevented observers of Mauritanian affairs from determining the actual and numerical importance of each of the disputing factions.

Even though the Islamist political organizations in the Arab Maghreb are experiencing numerous difficulties that make them incapable of taking control of the

initiative and even though these organizations are in a state of reaction and retreat at times, they continue to constitute an active, fast-forming, multishaped condition. This is what permits them to survive and to resurface suddenly when tempests subside, and this is why those who study these organizations continue to follow up and remain alert, without being greatly influenced by the fluctuating political conditions. For all these reasons, the question that continues to be raised is: How does the future of the Islamist movements in the Arab Maghreb region look?

Joint Deals

The Maghreb Islamist parties share many things. They are generally nurtured by the same cultural sources, and they receive their basic concepts on religion, law, education, politics, and social development from nearly the same sources. Moreover, they all aspire, without exception, to take control of power and to establish an "Islamic rule."

But to rely on the common denominators and to proceed from such denominators to making generalizations is likely to abridge and simplify the phenomenon. There are big and important differences between these parties that reach the point of contradiction. They are different from one another in terms of how developed they are, organizational and political experiences, the nature of their phased and tactical plans, how they manage the conflict with the government, and in terms of the relations they establish with the various political and social forces. They may also differ in terms of how they tackle some intellectual and religious issues and the methodology they employ to deal with the West, its cultural organizations, and its political institutions.

Despite all of this, the main source of difference between these movements is the fact that they belong to countries whose major problems are close but whose domestic conditions are different, not to mention the different manner in which government, the elite, and society's civilian structures have developed in these countries. As these movements have not maintained uniform and constant positions toward the existing regimes, the regimes' policies toward the Islamic political entities have also changed and altered with the change of conditions and the succession of governments. This factor has contributed in turn to making the Maghreb Islamist movements diverse and greatly unique, thus making it difficult to talk about them as a homogenous and uniform political bloc with a common future.

Libyan Condition

We will begin with Libya, where the Muslim Brotherhood collapsed as of the early years of the Libyan revolution. Subsequently, differences of opinion developed. Part of the brotherhood reconciled itself with the new regime in the hope of accomplishing some of its convictions through the ruling and influential agencies. Another part decided to withdraw from the arena when

the confrontation escalated or became protracted. Others opted for peaceful or armed resistance and they have cooperated with all of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi's adversaries. Some of them have maintained their ideological and organizational identity. Others have opted for a broad national front and selected front-based action as a formula for phased mobilization. But despite some significant military operations (the most important of which was the al-'Aziziyah Barracks operation), Libyan opposition efforts in Libya generally have continued to be very narrow and without much impact. This explains the regime's stability and its survival without facing major domestic difficulties.

However, some religious tendencies have tried to fill the void at home. These are predominantly spontaneous and offhand tendencies that have very narrow religious authority and that do not form an intellectual or organizational extension of the brotherhood. For example, the fundamentalist tendency spread in some areas and mosques and debates were held between this tendency and mosque imams on a number of subsidiary issues connected with the rites of worship and the confirmation of hadiths. A tendency close to the Renunciation and Repudiation Society also emerged, restoring authority to Sayyid Qutub's ideas and writings. This tendency proceeded on the basis of these ideas to confront "The Green Book" and "The Third Theory." A number of this tendency's members were jailed when they got to be too loud. Some of them even refused to hold dialogue with Colonel al-Qadhafi inside their jails. Al-Qadhafi criticized them violently in his public speeches, characterizing them as an affliction, and permitted confronting them with all means.

Those who have studied the Libyan society assert that it is profoundly religious and that its conventional structures continue to exist. Because of the social crisis this society is experiencing now and because of the unknown changes it is approaching, it continues to be likely to produce diverse young religious tendencies that vary in their degree of maturity and their radicalism vis-a-vis the government and society.

This phenomenon's political future depends on the structural developments that could be experienced by the Libyan regime, even though past experiences have demonstrated this regime's ability to absorb shocks and to adapt to tremors. It is certain that the Libyan Islamist movement continues to be very far from power. Moreover, it has committed numerous strategic mistakes that have affected its march. It will not be able to influence the future course of events unless it profoundly reexamines its methods of action, the nature of its alliances, and its religious and political culture.

Tunisia: Ennahda and Temporary Paralysis

In Tunisia, the situation seems to be different. There, the Islamist movement arose with the brotherhood as its

authority and its object of allegiance. Then it was dominated by politicization and partisanship and was Tunisized, becoming the biggest Tunisian opposition faction. When a body grows, its aspirations become greater, and it scares others. This is why since June 1981 there have been recurrent confrontations between the previously so-called Islamic Tendency, currently Ennahda Movement, and the Tunisian regime. The latest development has been the recent trial of Ennahda leaders accused of plotting against the security of the state.

This trial crowns a large-scale plan that was implemented in phases and that culminated with nearly total paralysis of the movement. The question raised by those who study the Tunisian situation is: Does Ennahda have a political future now that it has failed with its option for escalation?

It is perhaps a foregone conclusion to say that the trial of a movement does not mean, either historically or socially, a proclamation of the actual end and political end of this movement. The survival of a movement or of a phenomenon is tied to the general conditions and to the structure of the society that has produced it, especially because Ennahda had already been tried twice before. However, its organizational structures have been demolished totally this time, and it has not found any domestic or foreign party to support it.

The movement is supposed to be able to renew its organizational networks in three or four years under difficult security conditions. It will await the possibility of a political development in the country that may permit it to rebuild a bridge and to restore relations with the government, despite the wide gap currently existing between the two sides. Contrary to what some people think, it is difficult to say that Ennahda has "evaporated" politically and organizationally. But it is certain that it will not return to the arena quickly, and it is unlikely that it will return with the same structure and form.

The other element that will continue to be insufficiently clear is embodied in how the government will deal with the Islamist condition in Tunisia in the future. This condition is the broadest circle and is a more complex phenomenon than just the Ennahda organization. It is true that Ennahda constitutes the main body of the phenomenon, by virtue of its popularity and the fact that it has been transformed into a mobilized political plan. But the historical course of the phenomenon as a whole has produced subsidiary tendencies or intellectual and political endeavors to surpass what used to be called the Islamic Tendency and what is now called Ennahda. However, these endeavors, such as the Progressive Islamists (cultural tendency) experiment and Mourou's (politically oriented) recent endeavor, have not encountered the appropriate subjective and objective conditions that enable them to be established legally and socially as independent movements. Moreover, the arena includes a large number of elements who have an Islamist tendency that is characterized as "moderate"

and who are independent of any organized circle, including Ennahda. These independent Islamists constitute a starter for varied initiatives that could develop in the future. The element determining the efficiency of any initiative will continue to be the government position toward such an initiative and whether the government will or will not permit it to be established legally.

Algeria and Weak Link

Nobody expected that after October's well-known developments, Algeria would become the Maghreb country that would offer Islamists opportunities to become a party directly influencing formulation of the country's political and social future. An instantaneous political analysis confirms that the Army institutions, the Supreme State Council, and the government are all inclined toward a formula of broad national reconciliation. If this reconciliation does not include the Salvation Front or one of its wings, it will at least include Hamas Movement and Ennahda [Revival] Party, and perhaps political and intellectual notables known for their Islamist background. Dealing with the Islamists, or with some of them, has become a political necessity dictated by the logic of the balance of forces and demanded by Algeria's interest. This is what is reiterated by various Algerian circles and concluded by numerous analyses.

Observers also reach the same conclusion when they go beyond Algeria's circumstantial situation and consider its strategic horizons. The government, though newborn, is disintegrating. Society is experiencing profound structural crises that require a high degree of mobilization, sacrifice, and solidarity. The Army, though constituting the political regime's main support since the regime was established, faces the threat of an eruption if it continues to be the sole power entrusted with protecting the legitimate government, establishing continuity, and controlling society's civilian procession. The military establishment cannot be the alternative to the state, and it cannot protect a society facing the threat of disintegration for very long. This establishment will not be able to confront complex social and political phenomena for long periods of time. Such phenomena are capable of permeating the military establishment itself in a society where no deep historical barriers exist between the Army and the people.

All of the above considerations chart a growing future role for the Islamist movement, not just in the religious and cultural areas, but especially in the political sphere and in society's civilian structures. This is not because the Islamist movement, with all its factions, has decisive solutions and answers to the Algerian society's problems and concerns, but because this movement is capable of mobilizing, of militarizing, and of offering its identity as an inlet that appeals to people who are looking for a role and an identity and for immediate magical solutions to immense and exhausting problems.

Morocco and Wager on Special Quality

The political and social history of the Far Maghreb [Morocco] is considered largely responsible for the special quality that has distinguished Moroccan society from the region's other societies. The absence of estrangement between the religious and political sides since the state was founded, and throughout the state's history, and the absence of crude and sharp confrontation between the modernization policies and society's traditional cultural and religious values are the two main factors that have contributed fundamentally to delaying the emergence of strong Islamist movements that could pose a threat to the domestic balance of forces. It seems that some Islamist tendencies are aware of this condition. Mohamed Yatim, the Reform and Renewal Movement official spokesman, has said, "Our problem in Morocco is not one of building an Islamic state. This state is extant constitutionally and theoretically, and the legitimacy of religion in society and in the constitutional institutions is indisputable. The issue here does not concern a ruling secular party that abolishes all forms of partnership, but rather concerns giving this legitimacy, content, and credibility and developing these institutions until they approach or become identical to the desired model." AL-RAYAH, No. 18, 23 March 1992.

As in most experiences and cases, some Moroccan youth circles have accepted Hasan al-Banna's, al-Mawdawi's, and Hasan Qutub's ideas very passionately and enthusiastically. The first attempts to establish Islamist organizations in Morocco were made on the basis of these ideas and were embodied in the Islamic Youth, which was formed in the 1970's. But because it resorted to becoming an underground organization and embarked on various conflicts with the political and union organizations, the Islamic Youth found itself accused of assassinating Omar Ben Jalloun in 1975. Consequently, it experienced an organizational and political crisis that culminated with the birth of the Reform and Renewal Movement, which applied for a license in 1983 but has not yet received an answer. But it has not been prohibited from engaging in its activity, either.

Along a parallel line and from the center of the Sufist movement, Shaykh Abdessalam Yacine addressed in 1974 a message to King Hassan II entitled "Islam, or Deluge." After his release from jail, a solid nucleus was formed around the shaykh, and it developed gradually until it became the biggest Islamist organization numerically, known as the Justice and Charity Society. On 3 February 1991, this faction surprised the Moroccan arena by organizing a demonstration on occasion of the gulf war. Observers estimated the number of participants at 10,000 people, most of whom raised their Koran books in the manner of the FIS supporters. Since then, everybody has become certain that the Far Maghreb is no longer free of permeation by what some call the "political Islam."

However, Islamists do not form a central and influential force in society or in political life in Morocco. Moreover,

they do not form a united bloc with a common plan and ground, and they do not have a clear political program capable of attracting the masses. They are talking now for the first time about the requirements for their entry into the broad political arena.

AL-RAYAH, a publication of the Reform and Renewal Movement (the Second Group), has said, "Morocco's Islamists seek to break away from their isolation by adopting a clear political position and by participating in the coming phase in support of the Islamic Shari'ah." 26 January 1992

But there are numerous signs that indicate that it is possible that the base of the Islamist factions base will grow. One of these signs is the structural crisis being experienced by the conventional Moroccan parties. One manifestation of this crisis is suspended growth, limited influence, and weak initiative. Observers draw attention to the growing Islamist student presence in the universities and to the recurrent bloody clashes with the extreme leftist groups.

Perhaps by the end of the 1990s, the Islamists will have a different weight in Morocco. The government doesn't exclude this possibility. Because of its long experience, its intelligence, and its ability to maneuver and to absorb shocks and because of its distinguished policy in dealing with the Islamist arena to date, the Moroccan Government has begun to draft the political, and perhaps legal, formulae to absorb this phenomenon and to control the developments.

Mauritania and Quiet Labor

There remains Mauritania, the Maghreb country whose intellectuals complain that the region's citizens are ignorant of what goes on in this country. This country, poor as it is, has an active and ambitious intellectual elite. If there are those who believe that Mauritania has known nothing but the military, the communists, and the Ba'thists, then observers of Mauritanian affairs have recorded Islamist revival among the youth in recent years. The Tunisian model is considered the most influential in forming the general tendency. When the winds of political plurality blew into Nouakchott and parties were formed there legally, the Islamist al-Ummah [National] Party came into existence and applied for a license. Its request wasn't answered on the grounds that it contradicted the parties law. But considering that the elections were held without participation by the parties which had decided to boycott them unanimously, it is difficult to determine the true weight of all the factions, including the Islamist factions. It is confirmed that some parties, though in disagreement with the Islamists, have defended the Islamists' right to be represented in a legal party. These parties include the Democratic Forces Union (combines African negroes and Arabs), the Progressive Popular Alliance (Nasirist), the Democratic Justice Party, and the Independent Democrats Movement.

Nurturing Elements

In light of these given facts, a question is asked anew about the elements that make a large number of observers and researchers, especially western observers and researchers, expect these movements to survive, and perhaps grow rapidly, in some Maghreb countries and about possible surprises that could emanate from such survival and growth and could lead the region to transformations and turning points of different dimensions and kinds.

Four elements arise in this context:

1. Whoever observes the ages of these movements' supporters, and even of some of their leaders, finds that the overwhelming majority of them range in age from 17-40 years. These are the most giving, enthusiastic, and determined periods in a man's life. This is why social studies classify these movements as youth movements. From this angle, the movements are likely to continue and to survive for two generations or more. They haven't yet exhausted their intrinsic capabilities. Jails may exhaust them. But they will continue to be able to renew their human fabric to a certain degree because the two elements of gained experience and adaptation to the confrontation may enable them to create cases of normal generation, thus producing a new generation of leader cadres that pledge—even in most extreme and extraordinary cases—to ensure continuity and revival of the structures.

2. Continued decline of the economic and social mainstays of the regional state. The common denominator among the Arab Maghreb countries is almost confined fundamentally to the problem of the economic environment and to the evident disparity it has produced in the general distribution of national wealth. For more than 10 years, the middle classes have been subjected to a process of constant erosion and shrinkage. This opens the door wide for social upheavals and to destabilizing the general balances. Ordinarily, this condition results in an anxious and shaky personality and in a severe feeling of a dilemma. This personality affects in particular the youth, the isolated sectors, and all groups that are exposed to economic fluctuations directly. It is enough for one to examine the social and professional status of the most of those who stood accused before the courts of belonging to one of these movements to realize that the overwhelming majority of the accused range from teacher, to student, to employee, to small merchant, and to engineer, i.e. that they belong to the groups that have been exposed to economic, cultural, ethical, and even political, changes throughout 15 years.

Because the expectations point to a qualitative development in the Maghreb economy and in view of the major domestic and foreign challenges, as well as the unpopular measures these challenges will require in an effort to adapt to the changes in the world economy, the weak economic and social structure will continue to be an element that nurtures the climate conducive to the

proliferation of the Islamist movements and to the manifestations that accompany these movements.

3. Despite the importance of the economic factor, speculation on the birth or growth of Islamist movements is more difficult than an economic analysis of the social and political manifestations. Cultural uncertainty, the crisis of the national elite, and the dissolution and disintegration of the traditional intellectual and moral bases, without their being replaced by stronger and more capable cultural and behavioral mechanisms, have contributed strongly to providing the Islamist movements with external legitimacy and to the inability of the local elite to deal with the youth belonging to these movements or even to understand this phenomenon, to influence its growth, and to control its future. There is cultural estrangement between the elite and a phenomenon that has been born outside the [elite's] calculations and outside their competition.

4. There is another element that will nurture these movements in the Arab Maghreb region, meaning the political, economic, cultural, and social changes occurring in Europe. The rising waves of radical right and racism, the prevalence of fear of others among Europeans and the proliferation of this fear in a historical phase characterized by the retreating role of the parties and by the collapse of the leftist movements, and ramifications of the economic crisis—all these and other factors have given rise in numerous circles within the Arab Maghreb countries to a sense of rejection of whatever smells of custodianship or humiliation. Because the Arab Maghreb is adjacent to Europe and in view of the relations that have been established historically, cultural dialogue has become more difficult. Mutual rejection between the two sides makes it legitimate in their relations for each side to defend its political and religious identity.

These given facts demonstrate that the future of the Maghreb Islamist movements is subject to numerous and intricate possibilities, some domestic, some regional, and some international. Without neglecting the special character of each country, the region is likely to continue to seek a formula of positive coexistence with a phenomenon nurtured by history and by geography, by tens of crises that are being experienced by the region, and by major challenges to which this region will be exposed by the end of this century.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

'Abd-Rabbuh Spokesman Lists Negotiation Priorities

92AE0651A Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 24 Aug 92
p 5

[Report of interview with DFLP spokesman 'Azmi al-Shu'aybi by Khalid al-Jarrad in Amman; date not given: "Palestinian State Not Excepted From Final Solution; Yitzhak Rabin Puts Spokes in Wheels of Peace Process"]

[Excerpts] AL-NAHAR conducted the following interview with Dr. 'Azmi al-Shu'aybi, information spokesman for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh Wing, about latest developments in the Palestinian area in the context of the ongoing negotiation process, particularly during the administration of Yitzhaq Rabin. [passage omitted]

The Labor Party, as al-Shu'aybi told AL-NAHAR, is now pushing in the direction of granting the Palestinian people part of the right to self-determination, but wants to rule out any future independent Palestinian state.

[al-Shu'aybi] Therefore, in the negotiations, the Labor Party is now pushing toward a temporary solution based mainly on having the future [of the Palestinian people] be amalgamated with Jordan in an overall Jordanian framework. In addition, it wants henceforth to hinder in every possible way for a Palestinian state to be established—in short, to return to Jordan the least amount of land and the greatest amount of difficulties for the Palestinian state.

In confronting this, the most important thing for us, as Palestinians, is to know what we want and to order our priorities accordingly. What we ourselves want—the common denominator within the Palestinian movement and what the will of the masses has crystallized since 1987—is that the Palestinian people want their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent Palestinian state next to Israel on all the lands that were occupied in 1967.

This is what we want. But how does he want it? We have coped with the changes and have agreed to enter this political process despite all of the unfair stipulations. Some of these we consider insufficiently clear, and there may be danger in some of them. Yet we entered the process because we believed that avoiding it might be more harmful to the interests and future of the Palestinian people.

The negotiations about the first phase concern the Palestinian people's having full supervision of the affairs of their life during that stage, except for:

- security (negotiations about arrangements for it are under way);
- the fate of the settlements (the issue is subject to negotiation); and
- our right to establish direct external relations like any state (they would begin three years after the negotiations for the final settlement).

As for Jerusalem, it is no exception. There is no allusion in the invitation letters to its being excepted from this phase. I think (so said al-Shu'aybi) that our delegation has prepared for this phase in light of the change that has occurred in Israeli society in the direction of granting the right of self-determination to establish our state. There is no text in the invitation letters that forbids us from arranging our position on the basis of this concept, so the subject of a state is not excepted from the final solution.

What Rabin says about how our ideas about a legislative council pave the way for a state is true. There is no veto against that. It is our right. It remains the basic option that is open. He has no right to veto one of the options for a final solution. In the sixth round we have to pressure Israel to grant this. As for its own position, Israel is free with regard to it. That we will fundamentally insist on. [end al-Shu'aybi]

About the settlements, al-Shu'aybi said in his interview with AL-NAHAR: "We are clear on the issue of priorities. The transition period must include all of the Palestinian lands that were occupied in 1967. There can be no yielding of them; that is a grave danger. They are mentioned in the invitation letter, in all of the positions and in the American position, and Arab Jerusalem is included by implication."

Concerning the other guidelines formulated in the preparatory round held recently in Amman after Rabin took office, al-Shu'aybi said: "The second issue is that the Palestinian authorities elected in the transition period be responsible for all of the residents of the occupied areas, including Jewish settlers. There will not be two regimes in the same territory. In other words, we are against the idea of having different laws in the same territory. Otherwise, it will be the seed of racism. We will utterly reject the application of racist laws in this phase or the existence of two kinds of residents. A single set of laws will be enforced for the same territory."

"We will reject it because it grants in principle that Israel has the right to 'extra territories' [preceding phrase in English] outside of the areas in which it existed in 1967. This also has been rejected internationally—that any state should establish an extension of its sovereignty outside its borders."

About the nature of the settlements, al-Shu'aybi said: "We are against any distinction between security settlements and political settlements. Settlements are settlements. So it is a grievous mistake to divide the settlements."

About security he said: "We accept dealing with the settlers as subjects who reside in Palestinian territory. We will give them all of the rights enjoyed by foreign subjects."

"Another condition is that the Israelis must surrender all of the lands they took by force in the period before the Palestinian government begins to rule. In other words, all public and private lands, either lands that were confiscated or those that are still under the control of Israeli ministries, must be under the control of the Palestinian authority."

"Another condition is that there shall be no dividing up of the transition period; it shall be one period. There shall be no division of the process of transferring authority. It must be fully transferred all at once, like turning a page. We are not considering any postponement of elections. They must include all the Palestinian

residents in all the occupied areas, including Jerusalem. They must be on an all-at-once basis, with the occupied areas, as a geographical area, to be divided into districts. We will not negotiate with Israel about the details of the election system, because it is a constructive system. However, we may put into the picture of our system the international committee that will supervise the elections, the districts, and the number of seats of each district."

As for what is open to negotiation with regard to the elections, al-Shu'aybi said: "Negotiation will be about the starting point, which is the election of Palestinian legislative authority. This authority will encompass all Palestinian residents who were present before the start of the 1967 war, including residents of Jerusalem and those who were outside the region for study or work and were not in the region at the time of the outbreak of the war. We will insist on the return of all those who have been expelled and the release of all Palestinian political prisoners and administrative detainees."

Al-Shu'aybi believes that the current round is one of listening to the changes in the Israeli position. Rabin now must make the change in Israeli policies visible at the negotiating table.

IRAQ

Opposition Figure Bemoans Lack of Unity

92AE0578B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Jul 92
p 13

[Article by Hasan al-Jalabi: "Iraqi People Risk Catastrophe Because of Opposition Weakness"]

[Text] It is no exaggeration or misrepresentation to say that prior to the Iraqi national conference in Vienna, Iraqi opposition abroad remained on the sidelines vis-a-vis developments at home, watching helplessly, from a close distance or from afar, as Saddam and his regime murdered, slaughtered, burned, destroyed, denigrated people's dignity, and relinquished sovereignty. They were unable to influence the course of events or do anything of consequence.

The long-awaited Vienna conference has now been held—long-awaited because hopes and aspirations were pegged on it as it the vehicle to induce the changes that would shift operations into the gear necessary to get rid of Saddam and his regime, and even higher. The Iraqis and the rest of the world are watching to see how faithfully the [conference resolutions] will be implemented and how empirical the shift to the business at hand will be. Will those elected by the conference rise to expectations or will they succumb into the same old opposition stance?

It is only fair to acknowledge that those whom the conference charged with leading the effort to topple Saddam, entrusting them with that grave responsibility,

are facing formidable challenges. Challenges so overwhelming that they could break a man's back.

We only need to mention the fortresses that Saddam has erected for his protection and the huge facilities he maintains for spying and sleuthing in order to strike down any overthrow attempt. This has rendered him almost invincible in Baghdad, as proved by recent events in Baghdad's near north.

I believe that the Iraqi people have no need at home and abroad that is greater than their need for national unity in order to divest themselves of Saddam and his regime. There is therefore no more excuses for those who have not yet jumped on the national unity bandwagon because of one pretext or another.

Whose interest would be served by recent demands for the suspension or postponement of Iraqi national conference resolutions until the larger conference takes place? What can the latter hope to accomplish that the Vienna conference has not, except perhaps the presence or absence of some of the honored brothers who have dedicated themselves to that same sacred cause?

Those who had the honor of taking part in the Damascus meeting sponsored late last year by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution, and those who had the honor of attending the Iraqi national conference know full well that the activities and resolutions of both meetings were essentially the same. Vienna was a continuation of Damascus and an implementation of its resolutions.

Irrefutable proof can be found in a quick comparison between the Vienna and the Damascus communiques. The same five points on which al-Hakim focused in his address to those gathered in Damascus are the same five points that propelled the Vienna conference and its resolutions.

The Vienna communique emphasized national unity just as much as the Damascus communique did, perhaps even more. Didn't the Vienna communique commend the role of the Iraqi people at home and abroad, just like the Damascus communique? The two communiques share not only their assessment of the people but also their position on the armed forces. Did the Vienna communique put less emphasis than the Damascus communique on the regional and international components of the plan for change and liberation in Iraq?

Does anyone doubt that there is a link between the conference and the meeting? Let me make a request of those who still wish to say or believe otherwise. Prove your point with established fact and written proof. Today, more than at any other time in its black history with Saddam, the Iraqi people need every ounce of sincere effort and every drop of sacred blood that the sons of Iraq repeatedly gave in the effort to terminate the Saddam nightmare that has dominated their past and still clouds their present and their future.

It is time for us to give priority to standards based on effort and fact—over those based on personalities and self-aggrandizement—when we make assessments and draw plans for liberating our beloved Iraq.

The need today is for unity in the noble effort to which we are called by our people and our fatherland, and not for joining one group or another or rallying behind some person or another. As long as good patriotic action is the standard, credit for accomplishment would not go to any one person involved in the common cause. All of us will be victors if we accomplish the supreme objective, and all of us will be losers if we fail.

As long as change and liberation are our common objectives, why, then, don't we all adopt the liberation plan drawn up at the Iraqi national conference? Is it fair or justified to put the Iraqi people through another year of torture and misery while they wait for us to agree on a solution to what is known by our brothers in the opposition as "the problems of quotas, veto, space, and place"?

In this regard, the authorities elected by the Iraqi national conference must hasten to straighten things out and coordinate between our Kurdish brothers and the actual provisional government that the conference plan calls for establishing on Iraqi soil in order to go about the business of toppling Saddam and his regime.

There is a considerable vacuum of centralized authority in the area, which is recognized by the world and regional powers and which should be promptly filled and not allowed to continue any longer now that Iraqi Kurdistan has been irrevocably liberated from Saddam. It is imperative to establish a central government, even if provisional, as quickly as possible in order to speak for it [Iraqi Kurdistan] and interact with it to solve its many economic, financial, political, and diplomatic problems.

The tension that gripped Iraq as a result of Madame Mitterand's visit to Kurdistan, and the consequent attempt on her life, and Demarel's statements, underscores the urgent need to fill the aforementioned vacuum. To the degree that such a government is valid and strong and capable of earning regional and international acceptance, it would be possible to secure Iraqi salvation and liberation and ensure for our Kurdish brothers satisfaction, stability, and their right to self-determination within a united Iraqi fatherland.

Another thing that needs to be developed and implemented without delay is the creation of provisional central government administrations, agencies, and offices to deal with foreign, economic, and financial affairs and with information needs. The establishment of those agencies, and the central authority that would have responsibility for them, is imperative in order to deal with such matters, inside Iraq and abroad, with various nations and international organizations in order to secure the field and harness the military, economic, financial, and diplomatic means that such a government needs for discharging its responsibilities, especially as

they relate to international trade guarantees and the release to it of Iraqi funds frozen in some countries.

It is worth mentioning at this point that Saddam's relations with the United Nations are passing through another of the many crises that his government keeps on contriving whenever he needs to cover his feebleness by flexing his muscles and testing his power, as he did in the first crisis about the documents. He is again doing the same thing, inane and rigid in dealing with inspectors assigned to verify the elimination of his weapons of mass destruction. He attacks the world organization's officials charged with providing relief to Iraqis in the north and south who have been scorched by the hell of his regime, and he refuses to renew the agreement with the United Nations for that purpose. He adamantly refuses to agree with UN officials on measures for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 706 and 712, which call for the sale of \$1.6-billion-worth of Iraqi oil and using the revenue, under U.N. supervision, for the relief work specified in the resolutions.

Saddam once again seizes the opportunity to prove to the world community and to international public opinion his insincerity and his inability to deal rationally and reasonably with the needs of Iraq, the region, and the world. This supports the claim of those elected in Vienna to replace his [Saddam's] government in all possible fields.

Al-Hashimi Resignation Sparks Rumors

92AE0578A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
1 Aug 92 p 2

[Article by Amir Dhaheri: "More Senior Official Changes and Dismissals Expected in Iraq"]

[Text] Those who followed the Gulf crisis and the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait on their television screen will recall 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Hashimi, then Iraqi ambassador in Paris. While other Iraqi diplomats attempted to evade the media, al-Hashimi stood out for his pleasantness, decency, and fast responses to reporters' questions.

Al-Hashimi was assigned to Paris after serving several years as head of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Authority, where he played an important role in realizing Saddam Husayn's dream for nuclear military technology.

The 58-year-old diplomat, accompanied by his family, was among the first to return to Iraq, through Jordan, following Iraq's defeat in the war and the forced evacuation of its troops from Kuwait. Shortly after his return, al-Hashimi was given the portfolio of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Al-Hashimi was dismissed last Thursday without comment and was succeeded by Humam 'Abd-al-Khaliq, one of President Husayn's closest confidants.

Is al-Hashimi guilty in the eyes of the Baghdad regime? Rumors to that effect are circulating in Baghdad and in

Western diplomatic circles. The reason given is that al-Hashimi dared to indirectly criticize some aspects of Saddam's policies. One such criticism came during a seminar on higher education held in Baghdad last May. Several members of the Revolutionary Command Council attended the seminar, at which Saddam personally acted as chairman. Al-Hashimi then presented a paper that was sharply critical of the state of university education in Iraq.

He reportedly said that standards of education and technological progress in Iraq suffered a lot as a result of "intervention by unauthorized and unqualified elements." The remark was taken as a shot at the ruling Ba'th Party and its suffocating control of Iraqi universities and research centers. Some analysts believe that al-Hashimi may have also warned Saddam Husayn against "fooling around" with the United Nations.

Philippe Mouaneux [?], a French expert on Iraqi affairs, said that the Ba'th Party rejects any organized criticism of any aspect of its leadership policies.

He added that "senior officials with opposing viewpoints point their criticisms at other officials rather than at the leader."

Mouaneux said that al-Hashimi may have criticized then Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn al-Khudayr at a council of minister's meeting and accused him of "miscalculating" in the recent crisis with the United Nations. It seems that Saddam took those remarks as indirect criticism of his policies and reacted by dismissing al-Hashimi and reassigning al-Khudayr from the foreign ministry to the ministry of finance.

Informed sources predict further changes among high Iraqi officials. Candidates for dismissal include Barzan al-Tikriti, Saddam Husayn's half brother who is currently Iraq's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. Al-Tikriti, a former security official, is said to control Iraqi secret assets abroad, and international diplomatic circles have been recently pushing for more scrutiny of his activities in Geneva.

JORDAN

Kuwaiti Airlines Boycott Jordanian Airports

92AE0473B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Jun 92
p 10

[Article by Salah Hazin: "Kuwait Airways Selectively Boycotts Jordanian Airports"]

[Text] Last week Jordan was the scene of two important developments in the area of air transportation, as Emirates Air resumed its flights to the Jordanian capital, thereby mending a rupture that lasted for more than a year, and, at same the time, Alyemda [Yemen Airlines] initiated flights to the Jordanian capital.

With the return of these flights, the Arab countries' airlines, which had stopped their flights to Amman

following outbreak of the Gulf crisis in 1990, will have all returned to operating their flights on routes bound for Jordan, with the exception of Kuwait Airways, which retains its offices in the Jordanian capital but does not do business with Jordanian airports.

Gulf Air flights were the first to return to Jordan immediately after conclusion of the war, and in mid-February of this year Saudi Arabian Airlines resumed flights on the Jordan route.

The return of Emirates Air flights on all routes bound for Jordan is considered a significant development for the Royal Jordanian Airlines Company, for whom the Amman-Dubayy route was a most important one. This importance stems from Dubayy being a hub for important airline routes in the area, especially those leading to Far Eastern countries. However, the political significance represented by the thawing of relations between Jordan and the United Arab Emirates cannot be ignored.

As part of its efforts to regain its former vitality in the Gulf area, Royal Jordanian has inaugurated a new route with Yemen. The route, launched last week, connects Jordan with what was formerly known as the southern half of the Yemen, which had owned Alyemda.

With the inauguration of this route, there will be two airline routes operating between Jordan and Yemen. The first, operated for years by Yemen Airways, belonged to what was known as the northern half of the Yemen and, second, the new Alyemda route.

This airline activity between Jordan and Yemen reflects the strength of commercial relations between the two countries, which have consolidated, especially after the Gulf crisis.

KUWAIT

Embarrassment Over al-Masa'id Comments on U.S.

92AE0473C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Jun 92 p 4

[Article by Hamad al-Jasir: "Al-Masa'id's Comments Reverberate, Embarrassing the Government of Kuwait"]

[Text] Currently in Kuwait, reverberations are being felt from the problem created by Kuwaiti National Council Speaker 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Masa'id's statements to an Arabic weekly in which he assails U.S. policy toward Kuwait, deeming that credit for the liberation of Kuwait should fall to those Gulf and Arab states that supported the war of liberation and not to the United States.

Al-Masa'id's statements caused the Kuwaiti Government much embarrassment. The government proceeded to consider the statements "a strictly personal opinion" of al-Masa'id's, and simultaneously affirmed, through a statement by Kuwaiti Finance Minister Nasir al-Ridan,

its "appreciation and gratitude to the people and government of the United States for their roles during the crisis brought about by the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait".

In a statement yesterday in Kuwait, U.S. Ambassador Edward Gnehm said, " 'Abd-al-'Aziz's statements come at a critical time in President Bush's election campaign and have adversely affected the campaign because they pertain to one of its main foreign policy platforms."

Gnehm said that he felt great exasperation with al-Masa'id's statements, simultaneously affirming that they will not lead to changes in U.S. policy toward Kuwait. In his meeting two days ago with members of the executive committee of the Kuwait-U.S. Friendship Society, headed by ex-Minister of Education Dr. Hasan al-Ibrahim, Kuwaiti Crown Prince Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Sabah paid tribute to the "impartial stance based on principles taken by the U.S. administration and the American people under the leadership of President Bush in confronting Iraqi aggression".

Kuwaiti opposition attempted to seize the opportunity created by National Council Speaker al-Masa'id's statements to increase criticism of the Kuwait government. Yesterday opposition leaders held a meeting to discuss developments brought about by al-Masa'id's statements. It was expected that a related announcement be issued after the meeting.

AL-HAYAH learned that this matter will be on the agenda of an open gathering of the opposition with its supporters next Monday at the residence of Mr. Ahmad al-Sa'dun.

LEBANON

Ambassador's Report on Litani Water Issue

92AE0559A Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 6 Jul 92 p 3

[Article: "Lebanon Is al-Litani's Gift; Full Story From 1897-1992; Why Was 'Abd-al-'Al Excluded, and Who Provides Israel With Arguments"]

[Text] Husayn al-'Abdallah is an engineer who has lived with the al-Litani project from the time it started in the days of the Free France High Commission for the Levant. For 12 years, he took part in drafting preliminary studies. He was entrusted with the project to irrigate the Tyre-Sidon plain with al-Litani water. In the first cabinet after independence, he was assigned the Ministry of Public Works' director in the Southern Province.

Al-'Abdallah examined (on foot) majority of al-Litani River, from its source to its mouth. Throughout that period, he was accompanied by engineers Ibrahim al-'Abdallah and Vladimir Yerdanov.

A few days ago, Ibrahim al-'Abdallah visited President Ilyas al-Hirawi and presented him with copy of this study, which AL-SAFIR is publishing here because of its significance.

Al-'Abdallah began with a famous statement made by Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al in 1948, namely, "if Egypt is the gift of the Nile, as Herodotus said, then Lebanon is al-Litani's gift."

The study noted that Lebanon is faced with a serious situation posing a threat to al-Litani water and, by extension, to the entire Jabal 'Amil area. When Lebanon neglects its water resources for dozens of years, then it is normal that it will not receive support from the international community on the water issue.

Al-'Abdallah said that if Lebanon persists in the course it started in 1948, this will give Israel more arguments, pretexts, and proofs that permit it to demand partnership in the water.

The study defined the arguments that Israel may use in its dispute with Lebanon over al-Litani water:

First, al-Litani water goes to waste at sea:

- The water volume wasted in 1992 is more than the volume wasted in 1948. This is due to mismanagement of the project for irrigating the coastal area between Tyre and Sidon.
- The failure to use al-Litani River water for drinking and irrigation in South Lebanon since before 1948 gives the world the impression that we are not in dire need of al-Litani water.

Second, the government policy on supplying South Lebanon with irrigation and drinking water:

- Not a single drop of al-Litani water has been used in South Lebanon, especially in the area between the river and the international border.
- Moreover, the project to draw water to Beirut has been confined to transactions involving the sale and purchase of lands between the two cities [development areas between the two cities].

Third, the 22 December 1920 treaty between France and Britain:

- This treaty contains a provision about surplus water that Palestine is entitled to use. As long as Lebanese projects to exploit al-Litani water have been halted, since Israel's creation, then Israel has the option to demand this water.

Fourth, underground water:

- Underground water is considered a reserve that should not be used. Whereas al-Litani water goes unused, underground water use and artesian well drilling are almost the sole source for securing irrigation and drinking water.

- Israel has given top priority to programs for replenishing the underground water reservoirs, which are the subject of constant government monitoring. The volume stored by Israel is estimated at 100 million cubic meters. These are state property and it is a crime to encroach upon them.

Fifth, Lebanon's silence on discussing water issues in international quarters.

- Losing al-Litani means losing the south, and losing the south means losing Lebanon.

Al-'Abdallah said: "Al-Litani has a story that we must recount with utter truth, honesty, and sincerity because it is totally merged with Lebanon's entity, sovereignty, and perpetuity. Al-Litani's story is long and old, and it has been closely tied to every era of Lebanon's history." Here is the story:

First Phase

The first phase of the story started with the onset of the Zionist Movement, especially since the 1897 Basel conference. Water was the main focus of the Zionist Movement because of Palestine's poor water resources. The movement focused its strategy on this point and began to deal with the question of demarcation of the Lebanese-Palestinian borders on this basis.

May 1916: The Sykes-Picot treaty drew the southern borders of the sphere of French influence in the Middle East region, extending south from the City of Tyre to Lake Tiberias.

1917: The Zionist Movement demanded borders that encompassed the sources of al-Yarmuk, Jordan, and al-Litani Rivers.

February 1919: At the peace conference, the Zionist Movement demanded that Palestine's borders be set at al-Awwali River, moving eastward toward al-Qar'awn and Mount Hermon.

March 1919: France rejected the proposal and clung to the Sykes-Picot treaty.

September 13, 1919: The British Government demanded that Palestine's northern borders be within a line extending from the mouth of al-Litani in al-Qasimiyah and extending eastward to Baniyas—the Dauville Proposal.

December 23, 1919: The British Government submitted another proposal calling for setting the border at a point beginning north of Acre and extending northward to include a part of al-Litani watershed rather than the entire watershed. France also rejected this proposal immediately and continued to cling to the Sykes-Picot treaty.

February 1920: France rejected Dauville's proposal officially and strongly, reaffirming that al-Litani and its watershed would remain a part of Lebanon's territories.

June 1920: France offered a compromise on marking the borders and proposed the following:

From al-Naqurah, the line would move eastward and then swing northward, almost forming a right angle, thus including al-Mutillah settlement and al-Hulah plain within Palestine. This solution, which became the final solution later, did not please the Zionist Movement at the time because the entire al-Litani watershed remained a part of Lebanon. For this particular reason, this proposal was subjected to a large-scale campaign by the Zionist Movement and the British press.

November 1920: The Zionist Advisory Council convening in Jerusalem adopted a resolution insisting that Palestine's borders with Lebanon include the lower part of al-Litani. The council transmitted this resolution to France which rejected it.

December 23, 1920: The eighth article of an accord concluded between France and Britain dealt with the water issue. It was agreed that experts from both countries would study land irrigation and electric power production from the Upper Jordan (al-Hasibani) and al-Yarmuk rivers and would allow Palestine to exploit the surplus water. This accord makes no mention of al-Litani.

March 7, 1923: It was agreed to confirm the borders between Greater Lebanon and Syria, on the one hand, and Lebanon and Palestine, on the other, without any mention of al-Litani River. In 1934, the League of Nations ratified this agreement, thus confirming it in accordance with the international law.

From the above, we make three extremely important conclusions:

First, France was strongly eager to keep al-Litani watershed within Lebanon's territories and to retain all of its water as Lebanese property. France considered this condition a mainstay of the State of Lebanon that it earnestly wanted to establish in the Middle East. Without this watershed, Lebanon would be a mini-state similar to the mini-states scattered here and there in West Europe, and this is something that France did not want.

Second, the Zionist Movement, backed by loud support from the British Government and the press, insisted on stretching the borders to al-Litani and on sharing Lebanon's water.

Third, the Beirut Province, as it was known during the Ottoman Empire, especially the part of it extending from Tyre to Lake Tiberias, including Haifa, the Galilee, and al-Hulah, was an area under Lebanese control. Practically, it was an extension of Jabal 'Amil. France did not demand that its influence be extended to Lake Tiberia arbitrarily but rather relied on geopolitical, historical, and demographic given facts. The City of Beirut was the center around which influential forces in the Ottoman

Empire orbited. The region extending from al-Ra's al-Abyad (al-Naqurah) to Haifa westward and from Lake al-Hulah to the foothills of Mount Hermon [Jabal al-Shaykh] and the course of al-Hasibani (Jordan) River eastward was a distinguished Arab region of which the Lebanese, as families, merchants, landlords, farmers, and workers, had the lion's share. Al-Hulah Plain, including the lake, belonged almost exclusively to the Lebanese, without any distinction between Muslim and Christian.

Phase Two

This phase started in the late 1920s and extended until 1942 when the General High Commission of Free France for the Levant (Delegation de la France Libre au Levant; DFL) took control of water installations in Syria and Lebanon.

This phase was distinguished by the hydrological studies conducted by Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al on al-Litani River throughout that period—studies that later became the cornerstone for the al-Litani utilization projects. It must be noted that a French firm emanating from the railroad company existing at the time, from 1929-33 specifically, also studied the water sources located in al-Litani River watershed and enlisted the help of two prominent engineers, namely Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al and Vladimir Yerdanov, each of whom played a significant role in al-Litani development projects afterward.

In another respect, one must note the developments that occurred in the Palestinian arena during that long period (1929-43) after Britain had taken control of government in Palestine. The political, economic, and demographic conditions were upturned, and the distinguished Arab area that we have noted above became an area under Zionist influence, thanks to the new conditions caused by Jewish immigration, land sale, and other issues and affairs upon which we will not comment.

In light of these new conditions, the Jewish Agency began to implement plans aimed at the later control of al-Litani water. Toward this end, the agency began to establish specialized political and technical bureaus and departments and supplied them with all the needed material and human resources.

Third Phase

This phase covers the period during that the High Commission of the Free France in the Levant existed in the region from 1942 until independence.

If France talks on historical occasions about its special relations in the Levant, then there is no doubt that the water utilization projects Free France built in Syria and Lebanon constitute a golden page in those relations. We, the ones who lived with that phase closely, must say a word of truth: The approach to al-Litani River water emanated from the principle of utilizing it completely, from al-Biqa' to the international borders, for the benefit of Lebanon. The French water policy was compatible

with the position France had taken during the Lebanon-Palestine border demarcation.

This period was distinguished by construction of the infrastructure to utilize al-Litani River water. The train of topographic, hydrological, and geological studies began rolling. This was followed by blueprints for al-Litani River water and electricity development projects all along the river course. Those projects took into account the principle of giving priority to the poor or dispossessed areas, beginning with the eastern and western al-Biqā' plains and up to South Lebanon, especially the Jabal 'Amil area.

Two engineers who played the primary role in this period were Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al, who was put in charge of the hydrology branch of the water authority, which was established in 1938 in the Lebanese Ministry of Public Works, and Vladimir Yerdanov, who was chief engineer at the water agency controlled by the French High Commission.

In addition to studies covering all aspects connected with development of al-Litani River, so that its water would be utilized totally within Lebanon, the French High Commission built the project for irrigating the Tyre-Sidon plain with al-Litani water and Ra's al-'Ayn springs and delivered this project to the independent [Lebanese] government.

This project provides irrigation water for the a plain that is well-known for fertile lands that stretch between the cities of Sidon and Tyre and all the way to al-Ra's al-Abyad, covering an area of nearly 5,100 hectares.

Fourth and Final Phase

Independence phase: This period extends from the late 1940's to today, covering nearly 46 years. If we exclude the last 16 years of war, it becomes evident to us that throughout the first 30 years of independence our country was not able to complete the al-Litani project (for which complete blueprints had already been drawn?). The completed parts are parts connected with electricity production. But nothing has been done in the area of irrigation, which is the more beneficial and more important area.

Nothing new, whether in terms of irrigation or power production, has been accomplished along the major part of the river course—a part that runs adjacent to Jabal 'Amil between al-Qar'awn and the river mouth at al-Qasimiyah—despite the potential on both sides of the river.

In 1948, 'Abd-al-'Al published his study in a book he called "Al-Litani, A Hydrological Study." In this study, he proposed that two lakes be built to store water, one in al-Qar'awn, with a height of 800 meters, and one in al-Khardalah. In 1950, Engineer Vladimir Yerdanov issued a pamphlet in which he dealt with equipping the central part of the course of al-Litani River (cours

moyen) with hydroelectric plants, known as the Yahmar, Bazghar, al-Dimashqiyah, and al-Tayyibah plants.

The al-Tayyibah project called for building a hydroelectric plant on the river course near al-Tayyibah. The electric power generated by this plant was to pump irrigation and drinking water to the major part of Jabal 'Amil area and all the way to the international border.

In 1951, the then Chamber of Deputies Speaker Ahmad al-As'ad realized the importance of this project and applied for a personal concession from the government to implement it. To do this, a complete dossier was compiled on the project, and it was submitted to the technical and administrative bureaus, which approved it. It was also approved by the specialized parliamentary committees and included in the agenda of a parliamentary session. I recall that it was withdrawn from the agenda at the last moment at the request of the higher authorities. It was said then that Point Four [now U.S. Agency for International Development] would deal with the al-Litani River issue.

Point Four

In 1951, the Point Four came and seized all these studies and blueprints and its experts spread everywhere. More than three years later, it submitted its report to the Lebanese Government in 1954.

In addition to (hydroelectric) power production, the report contained a complete irrigation plan for al-Litani River water. This plan covered the following five areas:

- Irrigation of Southern al-Biqā' by natural flow.
- Irrigation of Southern [as published] al-Biqā' with pumped water.
- Irrigation of Upper al-Nabatiyah by natural flow.
- Irrigation of Lower al-Nabatiyah by natural flow.
- Irrigation of the coastal area between Sidon and Beirut by natural flow.

The report did not contain a single word about Jabal 'Amil.

The irrigation works in the map attached to the plan end at the right bank of al-Litani River as if this bank constituted Lebanon's international southern borders.

(Development Plan for the Litani River Basin Volume I—General Description and Economic Analysis, Page II, General Location Map, Jan. 1954, OA 10 6-21) [as published in English]

Al-Litani River National Authority

After Point Four submitted its report, it recommended the creation of an independent authority for al-Litani River. The Lebanese Government was, for its part, convinced of this idea by virtue of the immensity of the project and of its future ramifications for Lebanon. This was in 1954.

Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al and all of the engineers and others concerned with the al-Litani issue had expected that this agency's chairmanship would be given to 'Abd-al-'Al, especially because the man, in addition to his ability, had by then spent 25 years of his life in ceaseless work confined to studying al-Litani River and because, during that period, he had conducted studies that had taken many years and without which it would have been impossible to launch the works so promptly. But contrary to all expectations, the chairmanship was given to somebody else.

As of that date, it became the prevalent belief in all circles that the al-Litani River National Authority had been immediately immersed in the swamp of Lebanese politics, and we will say no more.

In this charged climate, Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al realized that he was wanted no more and that he had lost control of things. But he continued his work as if nothing had happened, surrounded by a team of capable experts with whom he cooperated and who came to be known later as the 'Abd-al-'Al team, formed under the leadership of engineers Vladimir Yerdanov and Joseph Amasyan.

Ibrahim 'Abd-al-'Al died three years later, and numerous question marks were raised regarding his death and its circumstances! But the 'Abd-al-'Al team continued its work at the Ministry of Water and Electricity Affairs.

The al-Litani Authority launched its work, relying on the studies it had received from the Point Four experts, plus the studies that were available to the Lebanese Government departments and that had been conducted under the supervision of 'Abd-al-'Al. Those departments also relied on 'Abd-al-'Al's private studies, suggestions, and ideas regarding the complete al-Litani River water utilization project.

Al-Qar'awn Lake Constitutes Main Source of Authority's Work

The first step was embodied in building the dam and diverting water available at the lake toward the western foothills after allowing al-Biq'a plain to get the water it needs. The guiding idea seeking to utilize al-Litani River in its entirety is based on these foothills and is subject to the following principle:

1. Regarding irrigation, control water at a high elevation so as to make it possible to irrigate the largest acreage possible by natural flow, especially on both sides of the river in South Lebanon.

2. The same principle goes for power production seeking to make maximum use of the waterfalls.

On this basis, the al-Litani River National Authority carried out the following works:

- The dam and the plants and equipment attached to it.
- The Markaba tunnel and plant.
- The Jun tunnel and plant.
- The Anan basin.

The authority then submitted a complete plan to equip the al-Litani irrigation and electricity project, relying on a water level of 600 meters, to the higher authorities to approve it. The 600-meter level faced technical opposition because it would deny the major part of Jabal 'Amil area irrigation and drinking water. This issue continued to brew for a long time and came to be known as the "war of levels—La Guerre des Cotes."

It is worth noting that former Chamber of Deputies Speaker Kamil al-As'ad has devoted concerted efforts to the 800-meter level that ensures full supply for Jabal 'Amil area all the way to the international border and has raised this issue with the international organizations concerned, especially the FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organization].

MOROCCO

Saudi Arabia Finances New University

92AF1070A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
26 Jul 92 pp 1, 4

[Report from Ifran by Munsif al-Sulaymi: "Prince 'Abdallah Attends Inauguration Ceremonies. Hassan II Applauds King Fahd's Gift to Finance Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane"]

[Text] Morocco's King Hassan II commended the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, for his generous gift of \$50 million to fund al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, near Fez. The Moroccan king said that the university draws its appellation from the two brothers—the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and King al-Hassan II.

The Moroccan monarch, speaking yesterday on the occasion of the laying the cornerstone of al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, said that he hoped King Fahd would be able to personally inaugurate the university when it is completed in 14 months. King Fahd was represented at the cornerstone ceremonies by Crown Prince 'Abdallah bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz, first deputy prime minister and commander of the Saudi National Guard.

The Moroccan king said: "King Fahd's grant two years ago to rescue Moroccan shores from the threat of an Iranian vessel's oil spill in the Atlantic was the means to realize my dream of founding an international university that would spearhead peace, science, and culture for all races and languages, especially Arabic."

He added that Morocco wants to do its share to bring goodness back home and return Arabic back to the Arab west, east, north, and south from which it retreated during the ebb, adding: "The historic ebb will be followed by a historic flow."

He asserted that Arabic will be paramount in the courses and curricula approved for al-Akhawayn University and emphasized that all Arab students, male and female, whether they opt for medicine, physiology, chemistry, or

mathematics, will not receive diplomas in English literature or any other language studies, until they have earned an advance degree in Arabic.

He said: "Arabic, its grammar, eloquence, and letters, is almost extinct. It will heretofore be possible for ambitious young Nobel Prize aspirants to also have post-graduate degrees in syntax and structure, eloquence, interpretation of the Koran, and grammar and principles."

He added: "This is a glorious day for Moroccans, as they invest in Moroccan manpower, as well as in the manpower of knowledge and science flowing in from sister countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe." He was alluding to the multiplicity of races and languages to be embraced by al-Akhawayn University.

Credibility of Referendum, Democracy Questioned

92AF1270B Rabat L'OPINION in French

8 Sep 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Jamal Hajjam: "After the Referendum on the Constitution, the Next Stages Require Openness and Credibility"]

[Text] The referendum on the revision of the constitution has ended with the adoption of the new draft, thereby marking the end of the first stage in the constitutional process.

According to the results made public by the Ministry of the Interior, the "yes" vote won with the "usual" 99 percent, with a "record" rate of participation of about 98 percent.

These figures, far from convincing everyone, have been the subject of several comments and have made a lot of ink flow.

Of course, no one doubted that the "yes" vote was going to win, in view of the fact that there was no recommendation for a "no" vote and that those who decided to take part in the referendum are those very people who called for a "yes" vote.

However, the true essence of the matter lies in the rate of participation announced: 97.29 percent, according to the final results. In other words the activists, members, and sympathizers of the political parties and trade unions who called for abstention represented barely 2.71 percent of the total number of registered voters. In this same percentage were also included those who had died since the voter lists were prepared, those who were away from home, travelers, and the sick.

This figure, which has been called "inconceivable" and which the revised constitution frankly did not need, stands out like a black mark on a brand new, white cloth. The effect that seems to have been sought has not been achieved, and it is rather the contrary that has occurred. With this result it is the constitution itself that has been

emptied of its substance, and doubts have arisen regarding the credibility of the next stages of the democratic process.

However, apart from these figures and their "credibility," one thing is certain:

The referendum on the constitution took place without the participation of four political parties and two central trade union organizations, following a decision made by their respective rank and file. By their decision these groups have achieved a position of particular importance by stating that the revised constitution, "does not respond to the expectations of the people, who want a major reform of the constitution."

Therefore, this means that they continue to call for a revision of the constitution and that the matter has not been closed, although the results of the referendum are binding on everyone.

On this basis a new revision of the constitution may still be anticipated, and this is what the king did not fail to mention in his speech made on the eve of the referendum, when he indicated that, "Like everything done by God on this earth, the draft constitution is capable of evolution for the better and then for the best. This is not a permanently fixed draft of the constitution.... Without there being a need for another referendum our constitution as such is capable of evolution."

Thus, the views of the king lay a foundation for a constructive dialogue to provide Morocco with a constitution enjoying the support of all of the different political groups and responding to present and future needs.

Certainly, the results of the referendum commit everyone. However, the fact remains, nonetheless, that the new constitution offers the possibility of being amended, given the fact that it provides to the king and the Chamber of Representatives the right to take the initiative in proposing its revision. It gives one or several deputies the right to propose such a change.

For the moment the referendum of 4 September is only one stage in a whole process. Morocco will begin another stage, that of putting in place its institutions, that is, the communal councils and then the professional chambers, the Chamber of Representatives, the Economic and Social Council, the Constitutional Council, and the formation of the next parliamentary government.

In most cases these institutions will be established, following elections whose credibility and sincerity are considered essential steps to guarantee authentic democracy in our country. All attention is going to be directed at this important stage, which will fashion the image of the Morocco of the future.

On several occasions the king has stated that the next elections will be free and credible and that Morocco will enter the 21st century with new institutions.

That means that the democratic structures that consecrate a nation of laws and the power of these institutions must be authentic and really representative.

Furthermore, the next elections must take place in an atmosphere of full freedom and openness if it is desired to ensure that our democratic process does not suffer from any questions and that it is convincingly seen to be democratic, both within the country as well as abroad.

The whole responsibility rests on the administrative apparatus of the country, which will be called on to provide evidence of absolute neutrality and to convince the authorities to abandon, once and for all, their old methods. Those are the very methods, many of which were unfortunately used when voter lists were prepared and during the operation of the referendum.

Finance Ministry Official on Debt Rescheduling

92AF1070B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
27 Jul 92 p 11

[Report from Cairo: "Rabat Seeks To Turn Foreign Debt Into Domestic Equity"]

[Text] Hassan al-Basri, director of external debt at the Moroccan Ministry of Finance, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Cairo that his country is about to embark on its sixth debt rescheduling conference with 10 creditor nations: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya, the United States, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Britain, in addition to certain international organizations.

Two debt repayment alternatives will likely be proposed at the negotiations—replacing debt with equity in existing Moroccan projects or in the purchase of commercial loans.

Al-Basri, recently in Cairo for a seminar on foreign debt sponsored by Egypt's Central Bank in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank of Jiddah, said that Morocco owes \$21 billion in foreign debt and that France heads the list of its creditors, followed in second place by the African Development Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Saudi Arabia ranks third, followed by Spain and the rest of creditor countries.

Commercial loans account for \$3 billion of total Moroccan foreign indebtedness to some 100 international banks.

Al-Basri pointed out that Morocco, as it negotiates debt rescheduling with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), seeks to reschedule repayment over 10 years after a six-year grace period that would begin in January of 1998.

Morocco is the fifth Third World country, after Mexico, the Philippines, Brazil, and Argentina, to sign debt rescheduling and restructuring agreements.

Al-Basri explained that Morocco's economic reform program will be completed in 1993, at which time the economic system will be totally free and the dirham will be convertible into other currencies.

He added that Morocco's economic reform has succeeded in reducing Morocco's budget deficit from 13 percent in 1985 to 2.1 percent in 1991, has shrunk inflation during the same period from 12 percent to 4 percent, and has reduced Moroccan indebtedness by 40 percent.

In addition to containing the budget deficit and controlling inflation, Morocco's economic reform seeks to reduce the balance of payments deficit, liberalize interest rates, and lift exchange controls in order to contain the black market in currency. He [al-Basri] added that the central bank's convertible foreign currency reserves now equal to the value of Moroccan imports for the next five months.

Expatriate remittances are Morocco's largest source of foreign exchange, followed by the tourism sector and exports of phosphates and associated products. France is Morocco's largest source of foreign tourists, followed by Spain and the Scandinavian countries. Algeria and Tunisia are the major sources of Arab tourists to Morocco.

Center Releases Demographic Projections for 2067

92AF1191C Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 6 Aug 92 p 7

[Unattributed article]

[Text] The Center for Research and Study has made projections about the Moroccan population in 2067.

According to those projections, the Moroccan population in 1992 is 25,547,000, 49.7 [percent] of whom are under 20 years of age and 50.3 percent who are 21 and over.

The Moroccan population in 1997 will reach 28,129,000, 13,002,000 of whom will be under 20 years of age. The total population of our country in the year 2000 will be 29,636,000, 12,977,000 of whom will be under 20. In 2007 the total will be 32,918,000, rising in 2037 to 44,403,000, and reaching 47,737,000 in 2067. Youth under 20 will make up 38.4 percent of the population in 2007, 27.4 percent in 2037, and 25 percent in 2067.

This means that the coming years will see a decline in fertility and birth rates. We will enter the beginning of the half century in old age, as it is currently in some European countries.

There are signs of this trend observed by Professor Huriyah al-Fizazi, who is in charge of media and public relations in the Directorate of Statistics, in a study she made of this subject. We will return to that study in a subsequent issue.

Statistics Point to Nationwide Economic Crisis
92AF1191B Rabat AL-'ALAM in Arabic 31 Jul 92 p 6

[Unattributed article]

[Text] After weak agricultural harvests, a limited revival of tourism, and the appearance of signs confirming the downward trend of expatriate remittances (4.2034 billion Moroccan dirhams in the the first three months of this year versus 4.2255 billion dirhams in the same period last year), industrial activity is fluctuating between slump and stagnation and is expected to deepen as a result of the critical financial crisis, confirming the continuing aggravation of the balance of trade deficit due to slow export growth and the rise in imports. This means we are facing a crushing economic crisis. As to the balance of trade, recent statistics from the Bureau of Exchange indicate that the trade deficit grew by 18.7 percent in the first six months of this year, compared with the same period in 1991. The deficit amounted to 7.2868 billion dirhams versus 6.1371 billion dirhams. Additionally, the rate of coverage of exports to imports declined to 53.6 percent, versus 55.9 percent.

This slump resulted from the 12.8 percent rise in import costs, versus an increase in export revenues of no more than 8.1 percent.

Exports in the first six months of this year cost 15,712,600 dirhams, versus 13,928,800 dirhams in the same period last year. At the same time, export revenues were 8,425.8 million dirhams, versus 7,791.8 in the same period last year.

In absolute numbers, the cost of imports was 1,783.7 million dirhams, exceeding export revenues by 634 million dirhams.

The cost of imports rose, in spite of a decline in energy costs, by 13.7 percent as a result of a decrease in world prices, not as a result of a decrease in exported goods (2,126.1 million dirhams compared with 2,463.9 million dirhams in terms of value, and 1,990 thousand tons compared with 1,910.3 thousand tons in terms of quantity), as well as a slump in the exports of intermediate goods, up 0.4 percent (3,552.4 million dirhams compared with 3,537.1 million dirhams). The cost of imports rose, also due to a 45.4 percent increase in the cost of foodstuffs (1,905.6 million dirhams compared with 1,310.8 million dirhams), chiefly as the result of the rise in wheat imports, and a 30.3 percent rise in the cost of construction materials (4,682 million dirhams compared with 3,593 million dirhams). Specifically, industrial construction materials costs rose 30.9 percent (4,556.6 million dirhams compared with 3,479.8 million dirhams), as well as the cost of animal- and vegetable-based raw materials, [which increased] 28.3 percent (1154.3 million dirhams compared with 899.5 million dirhams).

Moving to exports, revenues from intermediate goods rose 25.6 percent, foodstuff exports rose 9.3 percent, animal- and vegetable-based raw material exports fell by

4.6 percent, and energy exports by 29.4 percent. Export revenues excluding phosphates and their derivatives by 4.3 percent, reaching 6,455.1 million dirhams, compared with 6,188 million dirhams. They made up 76.6 percent of total exports.

This was at a time when the al-Sharif Phosphate Bureau's exports rose 22.9 percent, amounting to 1,970.7 million dirhams, as against 1,603.8 million dirhams, making up 23.4 percent of total exports.

Exports were distributed as follows:

- Phosphate acid export revenues doubled to 701.9 million dirhams from 360.5 million dirhams, an increase of 94.7 percent, bearing in mind that phosphate acid exports have faced difficulties in recent years.
- The expansion of natural and chemical fertilizer exports rose 802.2 million dirhams from 714.8 million dirhams.

But raw phosphate export revenues declined 11.7 percent, at 466.4 million dirhams, down from 528.5 million dirhams.

QATAR

Steel Profits Reach 127 Million Riyals in 1991
92AE9551A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 Jul 92 p 10

[Report from Doha: "Qatar Iron and Steel Realizes Profits of 127 Million Riyals in 1991"]

[Text] Engineer Ahmad Muhammad al-Subay'i, minister of industry and chairman of the board of directors of Qatar Iron and Steel, said that the company has so far realized revenues of 8 billion riyals on the sale of 6.5 million tons of iron and steel and that it cost it 2 million riyals to import raw materials from abroad. He added that the company had annual revenues of 660 million riyals and that it realized 127 million riyals in profits last year.

The company's chairman said that those figures are indicative of the company's contributions to the national economy. He added that entrusting marketing to the Qatari side, rather than the Japanese, was a second accomplishment by the Qatari management after the Japanese partner relinquished management of the enterprise to it and that the company saved millions of riyals as a result of that action alone.

Al-Subay'i discussed company operations in the first half of the current year, saying that the increase in production amounted to 12 percent of the plan approved in the 1992 budget and that the increase in sales amounted to 8.6 percent of that approved in the plan. Profits, therefore, exceeded plan projections by about 17 percent.

On another point, the company's chairman of the board said that many accomplishments had been recorded in the past five years in the areas of productivity, marketing, and programming. He explained that the company has realized 600 million riyals in profits since 1988, with a net of 575 million riyals in accumulated losses. He added that the company has, meanwhile, repaid 60 percent of all of its loan obligations.

In another development, the general assembly of the Iron and Steel Company held a meeting at which it reviewed matters pertaining to production and ore prices, as well as a number of financial issues that involve the company.

A company official emphasized that in view of stable world prices for scrap, it has been agreed to maintain current prices paid for domestic scrap. The board also reviewed a report about the Qatar Metal Wrapping Company (a joint venture of Qatar Iron and Steel and the Qatar Company for Transition Industries) which began operating last 18 April and has since produced more than of 1,500 tons, more than 80 percent of design capacity. A decision was also reached about setting domestic prices for wrapped steel.

Government Publishes Statistics on Trade Balance

92AE9551B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
16 Jul 92 p 10

[Report from Doha: "Qatar Realizes 1.6 Million Riyals in Wholesale Revenues in 1 Year"]

[Text] The Qatar Central Census Bureau revealed in its recently published annual statistical bulletin that wholesale revenues last year amounted to 1.661 billion riyals, compared with 1.2 billion riyals a year earlier. Statistical tables showed that there are 134 wholesale enterprises in Doha, most of which deal in services, and that the number of wholesale employees has increased to 3,801.

The bulletin dedicated a table to major economic indicators in the wholesale sector that showed that wholesale workers had average annual earnings of 30,000 riyals and that workers in the building materials wholesale trade fared best, with average annual earnings of 43,000 riyals, productivity valued at 161,000 riyals, and 142,000 riyals in per capita share of gross value added.

The figures also showed that workers in wholesale pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and beauty preparations fared second best, with average annual wages of 38,000 riyals, productivity valued at 109,000 riyals, and 81,000 riyals in per capita share of value added.

Tables estimating trade figures by economic activity showed that resale purchases amounted to 1.4 billion riyals, wholesale revenues to about 1.5 billion riyals, and retail sales to 188 million riyals.

The bulletin also estimated the value of production at about 41 million riyals, material and services components at about 91 million riyals, and gross value added at about 310 million riyals. Net value added was put at about 280 million riyals.

SYRIA

Biographic Data on New Cabinet Members

92AE0563A Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
30 Jun 92 pp 1, 3

[Text] Biographies of new cabinet ministers in the Syrian Arab Republic:

Engineer Mahmud al-Zu'bi, Prime Minister

Born in Dar'a governorate in 1938.

Graduated from Dar'a secondary school in 1957-58.

Graduated from Cairo University in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences.

Was director of agriculture and agrarian reform in al-Ghab, then in Hamah governorate (1963 to 1971).

Was appointed as a member to the People's Assembly in 1971.

Served the party full-time from 1972 to 1973 as secretary of the Regional Office for Farmers.

Appointed director-general of the Euphrates Basin Investment Organization, where he served from 1973 to 1976.

Elected alternate member of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party at the party's Sixth Regional Congress in 1975. Headed the Regional Command's Office of Finance, then the Economic Office, then the Student's Office.

Elected as member of the Regional Command at the party's seventh and eighth congress (1980-1986) where he headed the Regional Office for Farmers and the Regional Office for Organizations.

Elected as member of the People's Assembly for the third, fourth, and fifth (the current) legislative sessions. Elected president of the People's Assembly from 1981 to 1987.

Became prime minister on 1 November 1987 and served until his resignation on 24 June 1992, when President Hafiz al-Asad again placed him in charge of forming the new government.

Formed a new cabinet on 29 June 1992 in accordance with Decree No. 153 of 29 June 1992, issued by President Hafiz al-Asad.

Lieutenant General Mustafa Talas

Born in 1932 at al-Rastan in Hims.

Has a diploma and a doctorate in military science. Served in various units of the armored corps.

Elected member of the party's Regional Command in 1965.

Appointed president of the Military Court of Appeals in 1966.

Elected member of the Regional Command of the party's Sixth Regional Congress in 1975.

Appointed chairman of the party's Military Committee in 1977.

Promoted to the rank of lieutenant general in 1978.

Named deputy prime minister and minister of defense in 1984.

Rashid Akhtarini

Born in Aleppo in 1941.

Has a law degree from Damascus University—1966.

Served as inspector with the Central Oversight and Inspection Authority in 1976, then director general of the Tractor and Farm Equipment Distributing Company in 1978.

Then, he was secretary of the Aleppo branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, and has been a member of the central committee since 1980.

Became a member of the Regional Command and chief of the Regional Office for Organizations and the Regional Economic Office.

Dr. Salim Yasin

Born in Latakia in 1937.

Received a bachelor's degree in commerce in 1960, a master's degree in economics in 1963, and a doctorate in economics in 1965.

Professor at Damascus University; was also a college vice rector, then dean. Then he became a university vice rector and rector.

Served as minister of transportation, minister of state for planning affairs, minister of the economy and foreign trade, then deputy prime minister for economic affairs.

Faruq al-Shara'

Born in Dar'a in 1938.

Received a bachelor of arts degree—English Language Division.

Was appointed Syrian ambassador in Rome in 1977 and remained there until his appointment as minister of state for foreign affairs, then minister of foreign affairs.

Engineer Yusuf Ahmad

Born in 1947.

Has a degree in engineering from Damascus University.

Served as a member of the leadership of the Damascus University branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Served as a member the party's central committee from 1980 to 1985 as vice-chairman of the Regional Office of Students.

Has been minister of transportation since 8 April 1985.

Dr. Muhammad Khalid Harbah

Born in Hamah in 1939.

Has a doctorate in literature from France and was a professor at the Damascus University.

Worked as a teaching assistant at Damascus University in 1968; sent to France in 1970.

Appointed governor of Hamah in 1980, minister of local administration in 1985, then minister of the interior in 1987.

Married with children.

Dr. Muhammad Salman

Has a law degree from Damascus University and a doctorate in agrarian planning.

Served in various positions. Was deputy secretary of the Damascus University Branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, then head of the Branch Organization Office.

Was a member of the party's Seventh Regional Congress in 1980 and a member of the party's central committee that same year.

Appointed governor of al-Raqqah in 1980 then minister of information in 1987.

Dr. Muhammad al-'Imadi

Born in Damascus in 1930.

Has a doctorate in economic development and planning from New York University, U.S.A.

Worked as minister of planning in 1972; minister of the economy from 1972 to 1979; chairman of the board of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development from 1979 to 1985; was a professor at Damascus University's Faculty of Economics.

Appointed minister of the economy in 1985.

Dr. Najah al-'Attar

Born in Damascus in 1933.

Holds a doctorate in literature. Taught for three years then served as director of Composition and Translation.

Has been a minister since 1976.

Author of numerous books; wrote numerous studies on poetry, fiction, and belles-lettres.

Received several decorations including the Grand Officer [of the Legion of Honor] from France and the Award for Achievement in Culture from Poland.

Wahib Bin-Muhammad Husayn Fadil

Born in Salamiyah in 1940; holds a law degree.

Enrolled in the Military Academy in 1959, graduated as a second lieutenant in 1961, and advanced to become brigadier general.

Was appointed governor of Idlib late in 1981 and remained there until he was appointed minister of presidential affairs in 1984. He serves in the new cabinet in the same capacity.

Engineer Dr. Kamil al-Baba

Born in 1940.

Has a doctorate in electrical engineering.

Served as director of electricity in Aleppo from 1978 to 1984. Since 1984 he has been minister of electricity.

Married and has two children.

Nasir Qaddur

Born in Aleppo in 1932; holds a law degree.

Served as Syrian ambassador to Germany, Libya, and Yugoslavia as well as permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva.

Served as assistant minister of foreign affairs, then as minister of state for foreign affairs in 1987.

Dr. Muhammad Iyad al-Shatti

Born in Damascus in 1940.

Board-certified in pathological anatomy. Holds a master's in the pathology of the nervous system and a master's in cancerous cells.

Was professor in the Faculty of Medicine at Damascus University, and then chief of the tumor division in 1975. Became dean of the Faculty of Medicine in 1986, then chief of the laboratories of the Nuclear Medicine Center.

He was an international research professor from Cleveland Clinic in 1980.

Was appointed minister of health in 1987.

Dr. 'Abd al-Majid al-Tarabulsi

Born in Hims in 1926; has a law degree, a master's degree in Shari'an, and a doctorate in Shari'an.

Served for 20 years as director of the Islamic Arab Institute in Hims and then became mayor of Hims.

Was a member of the People's Assembly for two full sessions and became minister of Religious Trusts in 1987.

'Ali Khalil

Born in 1942 in Sabburah, Qatana.

Holds a law degree and a diploma in administrative finance sciences and worked as director of Internal Control at the Umran Establishment for 10 years. Before that he worked as an employee.

Became minister of state for the People's Assembly Affairs in 1987.

Nadim 'Akkash

Born in 1938.

Obtained a law degree from the University of Aleppo in 1965.

Was a teacher for four years, then an officer in the Internal Security Forces until his appointment as governor of Dayr al-Zawr on 5 November 1984.

Member of the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Muhammad Amin Abu-al-Shamat

Born in 1946.

Has a degree in Arabic literature from Damascus University.

Worked as a member of the command of the Ba'th Vanguard Organization.

Served as governor of the city of Damascus, member of the command of the Damascus branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, then a member of the People's Assembly for the fifth legislative session.

Husayn Qasim Hassun

Born at Sarmin in 1930; holds a law degree from Damascus University.

Was an employee of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor, then chief of the Working Conditions Division and director of Agricultural Relations at the Central Administration of the Ministry of Social Affairs.

Was assistant minister of Social Affairs and Labor from 1972 until the middle of 1976. Appointed governor of al-Hasakah from 1976 to 1986; governor of al-Dar'a since 1986.

Danhu Dawud

Born at al-Qamishli in 1944.

Graduated from Damascus University with a bachelor's degree in history.

Was a member of the command of al-Hasakah branch from 1971 to 1980.

Was a member of the Sixth Regional Congress in 1975 and the Seventh Regional Congress in 1980.

A member of the party's Central Committee since 1980.

Governor of Tartus from 1980 to 1984; governor of al-Suwayda' from 1984 to the present.

Yahya Abu-'Asali

Born in 1931; holds a degree in military sciences.

Taught school at al-Suwayda' then served as an officer of Internal Security Forces until 1969.

Was governor of Dayr al-Zawr from 1969 to 1970.

Appointed in 1971 as director of administration in the office of the president, then a member of the command of the Party's Damascus branch. Has been governor of Hims since 1986.

Engineer Dr. Nadir Muhammad al-Nabulsi

Born in Damascus in 1937.

Graduated from the University of Missouri in 1980 with a Ph.D. in geological engineering.

Became director of Qaratshuk Field in 1962 and head of the Biological Department of the Syrian Petroleum Company in 1968.

Served as assistant minister for Petroleum Affairs [as published] in 1975 until he assumed the Petroleum portfolio in 1992.

Married; has two sons and two daughters.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Subay'i

Born in Damascus in 1939. Received his doctorate in applied economics from the University of Louvain in Belgium in 1970.

On his return went back to work at the Ministry of Planning until 1976 when he worked as an economic consultant for the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development in Yemen until the end of 1978 after which he returned to work for the Ministry of Planning.

In 1989 he was appointed assistant minister of planning until he assumed the planning portfolio.

Dr. 'Abdallah Tulbah

Born in Damascus in 1939.

Has a doctorate in law and has been a professor in Damascus University's Faculty of Law since 1970.

Served as vice rector of the Faculty of Law in 1972 and as dean of the Faculty of Law from 1976 to 1980.

Heads the General Law Department at Damascus University.

Chairman of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee for the fifth legislative session of the People's Assembly.

Married and has four children.

Dr. Salihah Sunqur

Born in Damascus in 1939.

Has degrees in Arabic language and in social studies and philosophy. Has a graduate diploma in management and psychology and a qualifying diploma in education as well as a master's degree and a Ph.D. in education.

Ranked by the University of Damascus as a professor. Served as dean of the Faculty of Education from 1980 to 1986.

Member of the Federation of Arab Writers.

Engineer Dr. Ahmad Nizam-al-Din

Born at Dayr al-Zawr in 1947 and holds a doctorate in industrial chemical engineering.

Served as director-general of the General Establishment for Paper Manufacturing then as director-general of the General Authority for Chemical Industries where he remained until the formation of the new cabinet.

Dr. Mufid 'Abd-al-Karim

Has a doctorate in economics.

Was a professor in the Economics Faculty, then chairman of the Economics Department at Damascus University's Faculty of Economics and Commerce.

WESTERN SAHARA

Increased Tension Over Referendum Noted

92AF1277A London AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL
in English 28 Aug 92 p 8

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] Full-scale war could start up again between the Saharawi Polisario [Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] and **Morocco** if the impasse on the planned referendum is not broken. Polisario and Moroccan officials met in New York on 25 August and United Nations Secretary General **Butrus Butrus-Ghali** is due to report to the Security Council again at the end of September. The last two reports, in February and May, simply noted the lack of progress, and urged the two parties to settle the differences that have stalled the UN-supervised referendum on self-determination.

The main dispute concerns the Moroccan Government's insistence on including an additional 120,000 names on the electoral list for the delayed referendum. The plan agreed to in April 1991 makes no provision for these voters and the United Nations has not accepted the validity of Morocco's claims. It is clear from statements by Butrus-Ghali and his predecessor **Javier Perez de Cuellar** that Morocco has systematically obstructed operations of the UN peacekeeping force, Minurso [UN Mission for the Organization of a Referendum in Western Sahara], and is responsible for nearly all the cease-fire violations that have occurred so far. Morocco plans to go ahead with elections in the territory this October, again in contravention of the UN peace plan. Reports by **United States** Congressional representatives, who visited the territory in February and August, of Moroccan obstructionism and the consequent waste of some US\$58 million of UN funds have helped Polisario in the propaganda war. King **Hassan II** calculates he can effectively ignore the peace plan while UN attention is focused elsewhere.

Both Morocco (AC Vol. 33 No. 14) and Polisario are under great internal pressure on the issue. At their annual congress in early August, Polisario voted for a resumption of hostilities with Morocco if the UN referendum plan is not implemented this year. Polisario wants to prove it has not been seriously damaged by the defection of the former Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) Foreign Minister, **Hakim Brahimi**, to Rabat earlier this month. **Hakim's** career, Polisario says, was already on a downward trajectory: he had been demoted to Information Minister in 1986 and then made Ambassador to Algiers last year. Certainly, it is not as significant as the 1990 defection of **Omar Hadrami**, Polisario representative in Washington, who now works in the Ministry of Interior in Rabat.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Islamic Movement Leader Interviewed

92AE0511D Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 23 Jun 92
p 11

[Interview with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani by Husayn al-Yamani; place and date not given: "Afghan Holy War Is Amazing, Yet the Generation Growing Up in Palestine Is Even More So"; italicized words as published]

[Text] *Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani is a herald of Islam on an international level and a leader of the Islamic movement in Yemen. His knowledge of the scientific inimitableness of the Koran, Islamic tenets, theology, politics, and the principles of divine tidings have produced a mass following for this active scholar.*

AL-RIBAT visited al-Zandani at his home in Sanaa. As we entered, we were greeted with a smile and friendly welcome by his students and guards. They took us to see the shaykh, who had been at a meeting with Professor

Kaniko, a Japanese diplomat at the Japanese Embassy in Amman who had come to Sanaa to meet the shaykh. Later I was to meet Shaykh al-Zandani for a survey of the latest developments in the Arab and Islamic arenas.

[al-Yamani] At the start, I wish to discuss the purpose and results of the meeting you had with the Japanese diplomat, Professor Kaniko.

[al-Zandani] The Japanese professor is conducting research on Islam for the International University in Japan, and he wished to be informed of certain matters concerning Islam. So I took pains to guide him in the introduction and method of research—that is, to begin by familiarizing himself with the origins of the religion. This would enable him to learn more about related branches. I also took pains to demonstrate that the Koran is God's true book, and I presented him with a copy of the videotape "It Is The Truth". (This videotape features an account of Shaykh al-Zandani's meeting with 14 international scholars, all of whom pronounce that the Koran is truth.)

[al-Yamani] In your capacity as Secretary [of the Panel on the Scientific Inimitableness of the Koran and Islamic Tenets], tell us about the panel's latest achievements and how many persons have acknowledged that the Koran is truth?

[al-Zandani] There are several projects: A medical committee has approximately 33 new projects; an astronomy and geology committee has related projects, and another committee is addressing the good tidings of the Prophet, God's blessing and peace be upon him. These are the fields of research. We are collaborating with Khartoum University to hold a medical conference on the scientific inimitableness of the Koran and the tenets of Islam. With regard to those who have avowed Islam, some scholars have done so, while others conceal their avowal. However, most of the scholars we met had assented, but had not avowed Islam. As to matters unseen by us, we know of their consequences only when we receive the news that people have seen our studies and videos, inducing them to avow Islam.

[al-Yamani] Why did they assent but not avow Islam?

[al-Zandani] Assent signifies that the submitted proof was convincing, but that other aspects need to be satisfied.

[al-Yamani] Your Eminence, in the past you forbade factionalism, but have today become a most prominent advocate of the Yemeni Reform Congregation. What is the reason for these changes?

[al-Zandani] Religion is firm and has not changed or altered. The Koran proscribed factionalism among Muslims. We also call for proscription of factionalism among Muslims. Dissension among Muslims must not be conceivable. But that people become partisan to Islam—that was desired in the past, is desired now, and will be desired in the future. What is new concerns the new

circumstances. We have met those who evince factionalism against Islam, so we formed a faction for Islam and announced it.

[al-Yamani] In that case, is factionalism in Afghanistan inconceivable?

[al-Zandani] If taken in a doctrinal, interpretive sense, such as occurs among the four schools of faith...an opinion or doctrinal interpretation that views a matter in light of a given proof and another opinion or doctrinal interpretation that views another matter in light of another given proof, believing it to be the truth, although they do not form factions because of this belief. It is alright to be something of this sort.

[al-Yamani] Western authorities and their vassals in the Arab countries continue to launch an all-out campaign against Sudan following its announcement of the enforcement of Islamic law. What, in your opinion, are the reasons for this campaign, and what are your impressions of Sudan following your last visit there?

[al-Zandani] The campaign against Sudan is part of the campaign against Islam, because the West sees the obstacle to its domination of the world as being the existence of a portion of humanity who believe in this religion, a religion that prevents the mastery of the former over the latter. Thus the war against Islam is a war to facilitate the path for the declaration of Western domination of the world. They believe in this, and any country leaning towards Islam is considered a strong base for strengthening this religion and an obstacle in the path of Western domination. Thus the war on Sudan is a foreign plot dictated on those who follow these Western policies, and it is driven by the requirements of these policies. The only sin committed by the Sudanese is their desire for, and announcement of, Islam. As for my impressions of Sudan, they are not personal ones, but are known to all. In summary: Three years ago the people of Sudan were afraid of their enemies, were hungry due to a lack of food, and were opposed the application of Islamic law. A new word then appeared, applying Islamic law in obedience to God. Consequently, God changed the state of fear to one of security, and He nourished their hunger. I view this as a pictorial representation exemplified in the saying of God, to Whom all perfection and majesty is ascribed: "Let them worship the Lord of this house, Who nourished their hunger and allayed their fears." Thus the country that had implored the world for food and had implored world powers for assistance against its adversary is today exporting food and pursuing its adversary to the limits of its borders—all within a span of just three years. This example deserves scrutiny by all Arabs and Muslims, because the Arabs have strayed in pursuit of imported solutions and theories. How often have Arab governments announced programs they claimed would solve social, economic, and security problems. However, we found an enormous difference when men arrive who sincerely and honestly go about applying Islam. They achieve results at an amazing

speed. And between pride [as published] and marching behind principles, are theories and slogans that reap only will-o'-the-wisp.

[al-Yamani] It has come to my attention that you met the Sudanese Minister of Education and Culture, who evinced Marxist thought in the past and who consulted you on the status of those who commit the Holy Koran to memory. I wish to discuss this meeting and its results.

[al-Zandani] The minister of education and culture you referred to was indeed a communist, but he is now zealous about Islam. The minister had inquired about the social status and prestige of those who commit the Koran to memory. Here an engineer...there a doctor...who memorize the Koran. We ought to grant them a scholarly degree and encourage others in the art. I suggested to him that an allowance be added to their salaries. In addition to actual memorization, a college degree could take into consideration the comprehension of the Koran and knowledge of its lore. The minister showed avid interest in elevating the standard of the Koran in the country.

[al-Yamani] As we are aware, the leaders of the Afghan holy war are in constant touch with you, especially Rabbani. What is your outlook for the Islamic holy war in the Afghan state?

[al-Zandani] I was acquainted with the mojahedin when they were mere immigrants or, in modern-day parlance, refugees in the State of Pakistan, awaiting aid and succor. Their enemy was the Soviet Union, that vast global state that no one would oppose. I observed their victories over the Soviet Army; I observed them with the portents of victory in the horizon, while the Soviet Army was withdrawing from Afghanistan, and I observed them while the Soviet Union was in collapse and disintegrating. I knew them at these different stages and saw nothing short of fidelity to religion, a stubbornness in clinging to it, and the desire to comply with its tenets. I noticed that they approached disputes in a caring, sophisticated way. Perhaps you are aware that the integration of armed parties—each tantamount to a state possessing its own army, bases, and followers - with the intent of forming a single entity is no simple matter. However, when the Islamic scholars (leaders of the Islamic movements) reached them and the existing program was established, everyone accepted it, praise be to God, master of the world. As for my forecast for the future of Afghanistan, we shall witness enthusiasm in the application of Islam because one and a half million martyrs gave their lives for this. The price was a steep one, and the reward God granted them was commensurate with their sacrifice, for at their hands the Soviet Union was demolished, international communism fell, six Islamic republics were liberated, Kabul fell, and they inherited Russian military supplies left in Afghanistan. We expect them to play a significant role, by the grace of God, to Whom all perfection and majesty is ascribed, in bearing the standard of Islam in that part of the Islamic world to the east. Perhaps they will play a prominent role

in the unification of nations and the joining of their forces and in the move forward toward the implementation of Islamic goals.

[al-Yamani] In other words, this means that the primary cause for the disintegration and fall of the Soviet Union was the Afghan holy war?

[al-Zandani] You realize that few are aware of the details about the Soviet Union. Many nationalities existed under the umbrella of this union, and due to the overwhelming power of the Red Army, many countries came under its rule. The Red Army was the bond that held the divisions of the Soviet Union together, preventing them from tearing and disintegrating and protecting them from external aggression. The Red Army's backbone was broken in Afghanistan, thereby bringing down the buttress on which the formation of the Soviet Union stood. When this buttress was shattered on the soil of Afghanistan, the formation tottered and fell.

[al-Yamani] Islamic revival has recently come to the fore in a very noticeable way, especially in the Arab World. This is considered a portent of the Islamic caliphate. In your opinion, what is the path to the reappearance of the Islamic caliphate?

[al-Zandani] A correlation exists between the righteousness of Muslims towards their religion and their confederation into a single entity. When Muslims are rightly following Islam, they seek to perform their obligations under Islamic law, among which is their confederation into a nation as a single body. Thus the path to the confederation of Muslims is Islamic revival. And to the extent this is completed, to the extent it will achieve its objectives, by the will of God, the Exalted.

[al-Yamani] At the beginning of this month, you were invited to debate a Marxist proponent in Sanaa. Before that, you were invited to debate Salim Salih, member of the Presidential Council, who is also of a Marxist bent. What are the reasons for the failure of the two debates?

[al-Zandani] With regard to the debate I was recently invited to at Sanaa University, it was presumed to have been between myself and Dr. Abu-Bakr al-Saqqaf who, I am told, introduces himself as a Marxist. Marxists characterize him as a tough proponent and a leading intellectual figure. A time for the debate was scheduled by the university students. Both he and I were informed about it, and invitations were sent out. People showed up, as did I, but Dr. al-Saqqaf did not. Dr. al-Saqqaf is an example of our sons who are ignorant of Islam, knowing only what was penned by enemies during the supremacy of imperialist education during the imperialist era. Imagine my surprise when, in a magazine account of some of his writings, he says that the verdict on that which was revealed by God is a notion conceived by the Kharijites and revived in our day by the Muslim Brotherhood...God be praised! Where does he stand in relation to God, the Exalted's, saying: "Those who do not judge by what is revealed by God, these are the unbelievers"? Where does he stand in relation to dozens of texts on the

Koran and Islamic tenets? Where does he stand in relation to the history of the orthodox caliphs and their successors, among whose most important duties was rule by that which was revealed by God, as well as the establishment of Islamic law? We did not experience the absence of Islamic law until after the arrival of imperialism. With regard to the second debate, Presidential Council Member Salim Salih had asked, and I consented, that he choose any public venue or television studio. When I met the members of the Presidential Council, it was an opportunity to discuss many problems. After such discourse, he told me that the debate he had requested of me was now concluded!

[al-Yamani] Any words to your fellow Muslims in Jordan, that land of [mobilization and commitment], and to the youth of the blessed intifadah in Palestine?

[al-Zandani] A story, perhaps a meritorious one, says that at the end of time the situation will lead to mobilized armies in Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. When one of his companions asked the Prophet to choose a camp for him to join, the Prophet, God's blessing and peace be upon him, said: "Be true to Syria, for it is the most preferred of God's creations." I perceive that this prophetic word renders the Muslim camp that will be Syria the first camp chosen by the Prophet for he who asked the question. What we observe of international and Arab constraints directed at the vanguard of Muslim youth in these countries confirms the Prophet's nomination of the sons of this area and the elite comprising the sons of that area. For, despite enormous pressures, we witness valor in confrontation, persistence, and endurance. When we were in Afghanistan, I used to say that the Afghan holy war was amazing, but the generation growing up in Palestine is even more so. Those who struggle on Afghan soil do so with gun and cannon, but those who choose to confront the enemies in Palestine do so with only stones in their hands. I rejoice in the good news that a great victory and a favorable future awaits this region, God willing. But it is inevitable that we persist, inevitable that we persist and inevitable that we enter the test and give what effort and sacrifice it takes to achieve [our] goals.

Therefore, we tell the youth of the intifadah: You are the vanguard of victory, and with dispositions like yours we will achieve [our] hopes and objectives, God willing. You have trusted in God and prepared what you could [in the form of] stones. Be aware that, should the Lord of the Heavens and Earth wish to grant you victory, He shall, even if all those on Earth joined forces. You will know this if you embrace the reasons for victory. The Afghans provide us an example: the lot they were and the lot they have become. Tomorrow, God willing, the second example will come from these lands. I tell the youth of Jordan to stand firm, for God's triumph is forthcoming. The international policy that obstructs you from struggling for the cause of God will not endure, because it is the nature of political matters that they do not continue unchanged. Yet God's word is the truth: "If you side by God, He will grant you victory and strengthen you." God's word does not undergo change or

conversion, and He promised us victory. Therefore, let us work, forbear, persevere, and join forces: "O ye believers, forbear, persevere, and join forces."

Unemployment Said To Reach 35 Percent

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[Article by Hasan Abu-Talib]

[Text] If we probe the current causes behind the Yemeni economic crisis, we can point out that one of the most significant causes of this crisis is the mass and hurried repatriation of Yemeni labor previously employed in the gulf states. According to official statistics, the number of the repatriated has amounted to 800,000 workers and their companions, thus causing unemployment to rise from seven percent prior to the outbreak of the crisis to 35 percent afterward. Because of scarce resources and narrow investment opportunities, the government has been able to provide employment opportunities to only 12 percent of the entire repatriated labor. Meanwhile, 88 percent of this labor has remained unemployed. The condition has worsened even more with the deteriorating conditions in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Djibouti. Many Yemeni expatriates, estimated at 300,000 people, have returned from these countries to Yemen.

Yemeni Government sources note that repatriation of Yemenis, whether from the gulf states in wake of the outbreak of the crisis of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait or from the Horn of Africa countries, has caused the treasury of the united Yemen to lose an important source of revenue, embodied in the remittances from this labor and estimated at \$1.3 billion in the year preceding the establishment of unity between the two parts of Yemen. Add to this the increased pressure on the health, educational, and housing services, thus intensifying the elements of this crisis in these areas severely.

The latest study on Yemen's economic conditions since the unity has been conducted by a team from the Arab Banking Institution and has been published recently. The study notes that the mass repatriation of Yemeni labor from the gulf at the end of 1990 bolstered Yemen's revenues with remittances amounting to nearly 16 billion Yemeni riyals, a fact which contributed to reducing the current account deficit from 10 billion riyals in 1989 to two billion riyals in 1990. But this sudden increase wasn't free of negative consequences in another area because the current surplus in the hands of Yemeni citizens resulted in an increased demand for a limited volume of goods in the country. Thus, prices rose sharply and this has intensified the hardship of citizens living on fixed incomes, most of whom are government employees who live in the southern governorates. The inflation rate has risen to record levels, reaching 37 percent in Aden. In San'a', the inflation rate has reached 24 percent.

Yemeni Government sources estimate the total loss incurred by the country as a result of the gulf crisis at

\$3.3 billion, a sum representing 70 percent of Yemen's gross annual foreign revenues.

Burdens of Unity

The creation and foundation of the united state has not been free of burdens to the state's public treasury. The processes of merging government ministries, authorities, and agencies, transferring cadres from Aden to Sanaa, and providing these cadres with the requirements of an appropriate life have drained vast financial resources. Meanwhile, the government's total revenues have diminished. This is why the manifestations of the economic crisis have begun to worsen. This deterioration is reflected in the rising prices of goods and services and in the decreasing value of the local currency vis-a-vis other currencies. The official exchange rate is 13 riyals per dollar. But on the black market, the rate rises to 30 riyals per dollar. Imported products are also scarce. Real estate and land speculation activity has proliferated, even reaching state-owned lands, especially in the major cities, led by Aden and Sanaa.

If we turn to the structural causes of the economic crisis, we find that what exists is an economy characterized by domination of the service sector over the production sector, thus affecting the gross national product. In 1990, the government sector contributed 25 percent of the gross national product, followed by agriculture which contributed 32 percent, trade 13 percent, mining 10 percent, production industries nine percent, and, finally, the financial sector eight percent.

What makes the economic crisis even more intense is the weak infrastructure, including roads, advanced communication means, and services. This infrastructure is essential for and helpful to investment. This is especially true of the southern governorates where the infrastructure is extremely poor. This poor condition is affecting the plans to transform Aden into a free zone. The enactment of the economic laws [in the southern part] for a period of time and the country's worsening security conditions have caused Arab and foreign investors to refrain from investing there, excluding investment in the oil sector because of its special character. The scarcity of capable specialists plays a no less significant role than the other elements in diminishing the attraction of the available investment opportunities.

Means to Confront Crisis

To face the economic crisis, the Yemeni Government has decided to reduce spending in the 1993 budget by a sum of 13.5-14 billion Yemeni riyals. To implement this decision, the government has taken a number of steps, including:

Trimming the government administrative apparatus by applying the retirement law to civilian and military institutions, provided that a retired person is granted the salary of two months and four allowances. The administrative apparatus includes more than 270,000 civil servants and administrators, not to mention the armed

forces personnel who number 65,000. In 1991, the cost of wages and salaries amounted to nearly 36 billion Yemeni riyals, i.e. more than one half the state general budget which amounted to 50.8 billion Yemeni riyals (nearly \$4.3 billion), whereas educational appropriations amounted to just 16 percent.

Reducing spending in the government institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where it has been decided to shut down eight embassies, to reduce the number of workers at foreign missions, to close all consulates, excluding the Jeddah and Dubayy consulates, and all the press and military attache offices, excluding the military attache's office in Russia, and to keep just two individuals in each attache's office in Egypt and in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It has also been decided to keep just one individual at each of the economic attache offices in France and the United States and to shut down the press attache offices abroad.

Reduce the number of non-Yemeni teachers and workers employed by the government.

Reduce the appropriations for office furniture and equipment for government departments and reduce the number of publications issued by government institutions.

Ban vehicle imports, excluding vehicles needed for projects.

Prohibit the printing of school textbooks abroad.

With the 1992 general state budget deficit, estimated at 12.336 billion riyals, the accumulating deficit will have amounted to 26 billion Yemeni riyals, thus reflecting dimensions of the economic crisis encountered by the United State of Yemen.

On several occasions, government officials have stated that a number of conditions are required to confront this crisis, including the United Yemen's adoption of a flexible foreign relations policy, especially with the neighboring Arab countries. It also requires freeing a number of commodities from all trade restrictions, such as sugar, spareparts, cement, and lumber; imposing restrictions on some imports, such as textiles, refrigerators, and electrical and electronic equipment; and banning the import of goods and commodities when similar goods are produced at home. Moreover, a number of steps have to be taken to give investors greater facilities and to induce them to operate in Yemen. Bureaucratic redtape has to be eliminated and the Central Bank has to exert efforts to provide the foreign exchange needed to import essential production inputs. The government and its institutions also have to devote attention to establishing a climate of stability and of adherence to the law and they have to contain the causes of the strikes phenomenon that doesn't serve development.

Investment-Promotion Policy

The above conditions do not, of course, abolish the need for a stable legal framework that reveals Yemen's official philosophy on economic activity. This is why it was extremely necessary to issue a special investment law in April 1991. This law established the free economy policy as the policy of the United Yemen. The law also established a number of incentives and exemptions for whoever operates in the area of agricultural or industrial investment in Yemen with the objective of attracting Arab, foreign, and local capital. The law equates Yemeni and foreign investors. It exempts all project products from compulsory pricing and from profit limitation, provided that no monopolistic activities emanate as a consequence. The law also prohibits the nationalization and seizure of projects and it does not permit the impoundment, confiscation, freezing, restraint, or sequestration of project monies. It also gives investors the right to remit their net profits to the outside world. The law also offers projects numerous customs and tax exemptions.

Despite all these benefits, local and foreign investment activity is still weak. The abovementioned causes, especially the lack of security, the scarcity of cadres, and the weakness of the investment-enhancing infrastructure, impede an upsurge in this activity.

Oil Sector

The crisis of the economic scene in the United Yemen doesn't extend to the oil sector which promises an immense reserve and a great yield. Oil was discovered in 1984. Production began in the northern part in 1987 at a rate of 180,000-200,000 barrels daily. Oil revenues range from \$600 million to \$800 million annually. The most important production oil field is the Ma'rib field whose production is pumped by pipeline to Ra's 'Ali on the Red Sea. The most important discovered fields include Shabwah, al-Masilah, and Jannah fields. They are all located in areas that were on the borders of the two parts of Yemen previously. Yemen is divided into 29 provinces currently. Agreements have been concluded with numerous Arab and foreign firms to prospect for oil in most of them.

The confirmed oil stores are estimated at nearly four billion barrels. Sources of some oil companies operating in Yemen note that Yemen's production could double by the second half of the 1990s. Natural gas stores amount to nearly 15 trillion cubic feet. This gas has not been exploited for production yet. The tendency is to allocate it for local consumption because it is difficult to produce for export.

But optimism with oil is not absolute. There are elements and reasons that impede the prompt utilization of this sector, including the need for immense investments because of the geological nature of some of the recently discovered wells, such as al-Masilah well, and because

these wells need new drilling and production technologies, not to mention that they are remote from the coastline and from export terminals.

Most of the discovered oil is high-quality light crude that is desirable worldwide. More than 40 international firms (U.S., Canadian, French, Russian, British, Korean, and Japanese) and Arab firms (Saudi, Kuwaiti, and UAE) are organized in 14 consortiums prospecting for oil in Yemen.

The expectations of improved Yemeni oil production in the future are blocked by several problems, including:

Yemen's oil industry is in its initial phases. Therefore, there is a scarcity of trained and capable administrators who are capable of dealing with this large number of major companies that are specialized in oil production and export.

The absence of a service industry capable of providing the operating companies with the auxiliary services they need. This is why the companies prospecting for or producing oil in Yemen rely on their main sources in their mother countries, and this causes increased production costs.

AFGHANISTAN

Arab Participation in Mujahidin Movement

History of Involvement

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pp 10-13

[Article: 'Afghans': The Story of a Secret Organization That Strikes, Blasts, and Assassinate in Algeria and Egypt"]

[Text] The "Afghans" is a word that raises questions and tension among officials of several Arab countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, and Jordan.

The "Afghans" attack, sow violence, and assassinate such "state symbols" as officials, policemen, security agents, and the military in Algeria and Egypt. They detonate bombs and strike state institutions and buildings.

Those "Afghans" are the thousands of Arab warriors who fought alongside the Mujahidin in Afghanistan against Soviet occupiers and their satellite government in Kabul. They have been highly trained in guerilla warfare and in the use of all types of weapons and explosives.

Some people call them "loose bombs" while others consider them the "military arm" of a number of Islamic movements and operations in certain Arab and Muslim countries. They have also been described as part of "an extremist Islamic revolutionary movement" aided and supported by Iranian officials and by Dr. Hasan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front in the Sudan.

Those "Afghans" are Arab nationals of Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Tunisia, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon, and other states. Numbering in the thousands, they volunteered in the early eighties to fight in Afghanistan. Some were simply driven by religious fervor. Others sought adventure and fortune. Most received training in and around the Pakistani city of Peshawar. Others were trained at boot camps established in such Arab countries as Sudan and Yemen.

Arab volunteers were primarily attracted by the noble principles espoused, and high salaries offered, by the group of Islamic Party leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

In the beginning, some 3,000 to 3,500 Arab volunteers joined the Hezb-e Eslami. The number of those volunteers, Muslim and Arab, eventually rose to 16,000, then to 20,000 men fighting alongside Hekmatyar's Mujahidin.

Those who are familiar with Hekmatyar describe him as a commanding personality, intelligent, and merciless. These traits appealed to Arab volunteers, and especially to older Algerian veterans of Algeria's war of independence against the French (1954-1962). A few of them had been part of armed movements against secular FLN

governments in the 1980s. One such fighter was Mustafa Bouali who fought with the Mujahidin from 1985 until he was killed in 1987. He was at that time the most wanted man in Algeria.

Bouali had met earlier, when President Chedli Benjedid was in power, with other Islamic groups some of which later dispatched fighters to Afghanistan. He discussed with them the issue of declaring jihad against Benjedid's regime who he claimed "had dedicated himself to stripping off the Islamism of Algerian Society."

The current split within the Islamic Salvation Front led by 'Abbasi Madani, and also within other Islamic groups, is a manifestation of the rift that took place during the Benjedid regime, among Islamist leaders who had protested at the time that the climate in Algeria was not conducive to jihad. But Bouali decided on his own to send members of his organization to Peshawar for needed training. Meanwhile, his mosque sermons continued to denounce government policies on education, morality, and other social issues and causes.

In the summer of 1985, Bouali led an attack against the police station in al-Suma', a short distance away from Wadi al-Sumam which was venue for the historical revolutionary convention (1955-1956) which is supposed to have put the FLN on a strictly secular course. The authorities could not apprehend Bouali, who had seized a large cache of arms and ammunition, until 3 Jan 1987, when he was killed in a shoot-out with police.

Arab volunteers joined other Afghani Mujahidin groups, such as that of Yusif Khalis who broke away from Hekmatyar's party, and the Islamic Society headed by Burhan-al-Din Rabbani. The latter was noted for its field commander, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud.

Western weapons initially received by the Mujahidin consisted of American anti-tank plastic mines procured from Pakistan in large quantities for the first time in 1982. By 1986, they started to get Stinger missiles as well as large quantities of other anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, not to mention several thousand machine guns, mortars, light arms, and munitions.

U.S. military aid to the Afghani Mujahidin rose to \$400 million by mid-1986; and amounted to \$100 million in 1985 alone. Meanwhile, Arab and Afghani volunteers, along with volunteers of other nationalities, were being trained at the rate of 100 a month in the use of weapons and fighting techniques by a group of the best military experts, especially the Pakistanis among them.

The first time that the Mujahidin, including Arab volunteers, effectively used Stinger anti-aircraft and anti-helicopter missiles was in September of 1986 when a Soviet helicopter was shot down. As it turned out, the Mujahidin initially received 200 missiles and were promised two more for each confirmed kill of a Soviet aircraft. Mujahidin fighters who fired Stinger missiles and missed were to be sent back to Pakistan for better training. By then, the Mujahidin were also versed in the

use of Orlicon, a Swiss-made 20-mm anti-aircraft gun, and of Blue Pipe, a missile made in Northern Ireland which the Palestinian resistance in Jordan and Lebanon was refused when it requested them in the late 1960s.

The Bush administration decided on 10 February 1989 to maintain the arms supply to the Mujahidin despite signs of splintering along tribal, familial, and denominational lines.

Both the West and the Soviets had supplied their followers with billions of dollars in armaments, support, and other supplies, when Presidents Bush and Gorbachev announced that all military aid to Afghanistan would cease on 1 January 1992 in order to give the U.N. peace initiative a chance. But by then, both the Mujahidin and Najibullah's forces had accumulated huge caches of assorted weapons. Some Stinger missiles even found their way to groups loyal to Tehran, including the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and were used during the Iraq-Iran war against American helicopters in the Gulf.

The Soviet Army's withdrawal in 1988/89 signalled an end to the first phase of the war. The fight, as far as the Afghans were concerned, would not end until the second stage, i.e. the collapse of Najibullah's Communist regime last April 25. The mission of Arab volunteers ended with Kabul's capture by the Mujahidin, even though there were complaints that some of them got involved in the fighting that ensued.

The Arab "Afghans," now more than 12,000 in number, therefore began to return home. Upwards of 2,000 Algerians, to the knowledge of Algerian authorities, had already done so and some of them may have taken their personal weapons back with them. Some of the returning Algerians had been in important command positions in Afghanistan but they were of no political consequence since training and fighting were their only focus.

The temporary alliance between the U.S. and Muslim fighters began to end as the "Afghans" returned to their countries of origin. The change began with the 1988 U.S.-Soviet agreement and consequent Soviet withdrawal. Leaders of those fighters who successfully engaged the Soviets therefore came to believe that the time had come to "fight" certain Arab regimes, in conjunction with Islamic movements and organizations, as is currently the case in Egypt and Algeria.

Just as old Communists and Liberal fighters fought in international battalions side by side with the republicans in the Spanish Civil War from 1934 to 1939, the "Afghans" of the Arab and Muslim worlds, who include large numbers of Iranians, Indonesians, Malaysians, Indians, and Pakistanis as well as Arabs, would create a network of "graduates" ready to apprentice others.

Furthermore, Arab "Afghans" have a store of martyrs to strengthen their commitment and resolve. Their main martyr is 'Abdallah Azzam, a Palestinian who may have been born in Egypt, who is like a legend to them. He fought the Israelis in Palestine in 1948 and was an early

member of Fatah in the 1950's when Yasir 'Arafat and a number of his aides maintained strong relations with the Muslim Brotherhood. He went to Jordan in 1967 and disappeared after the 1970 incidents to again surface in Cairo where he studied for his doctorate at Al-Azhar where he later taught. In the early eighties, 'Azzam opened in Peshawar his first office to coordinate the recruitment and training of volunteers. 'Azzam himself fought in Afghanistan and it wasn't long before he became the most celebrated Arab fighter there. He gained his reputation, as well as wide fame, when he arbitrated among squabbling Mujahidin factions. He also traveled to several Arab countries in order to recruit volunteers and raise funds.

'Azzam was preparing to leave Pakistan on 24 Nov 89 when a car bomb exploded outside his residence, killing him and his two sons.

A number of Arab "Afghans" regard 'Azzam as a role model even if he did not necessarily share their violent attitudes and methods in dealing with such Arab regimes as those in Algeria and Egypt.

The "Afghans" in Egypt

On the morning of 23 September 1981, a few days before he was assassinated, President Anwar al-Sadat conceded in an interview with the ABC television network that Egypt was supplying Afghani Mujahidin with arms because "they are our Muslim brothers and they have problems." The correspondent asked: "How about Egyptian fundamentalists? Do they engage in terrorist acts?" Sadat replied: "No, the only thing they do is hold meetings but they don't use arms." The correspondent countered: "Then why do you arrest political opponents and Islamic activists?" to which al-Sadat responded: "It is all because of religious strife. The politicians I arrested joined with the religious elements and were going to exploit my arresting the fundamentalists."

Fundamentalist sources claim that a man called Shawqi Islambulli, brother of Sadat's assassin, surfaced in Pakistan after 1980, then moved to Karachi in 1983 to supervise the activity of Egyptian "Afghans". Rumor has it that Shawqi was on very good terms with the Iranians and that he helped deliver Iranian aid to Islamic extremists in Egypt. Other sources claim, however, that Islambulli's full name was Khalid Ahmad Shawqi al-Islambulli who had two sisters and an older brother who studied Commerce at the University of Asyut. If this is true, then Shawqi Islambulli may be a cousin, or even an unrelated person, who adopted the name because of the respect it evokes among the Mujahidin. Perhaps he never even existed at all.

Be that as it may, many of the Egyptian volunteers in the Afghan war had been dispatched by the Muslim Brotherhood with the full knowledge of al-Sadat and the Egyptian government. Several were physicians and nurses who did not engage in combat and were therefore no cause for distrust on their return to Egypt. Others, however, had gone to Afghanistan clandestinely to fight

or receive training. Those are the ones Egyptian authorities fear would intensify confrontations with the police and heighten sectarian strife in Upper Egypt should they return.

The Egyptian government recently requested the Sudanese government of Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir not to provide dangerous "Afghan" elements with safe haven. The U.S. State Department had a similar message for Dr. Hasan al-Turabi when he recently visited the United States and Canada.

Another living hero of the "Afghans" is 'Ammar al-Tamimi who is still in his twenties. The son of Shaykh al-Tamimi, a leader of the Islamic Jihad Organization in Palestine, his right foot was severed during a battle in Afghanistan. He became a crowd-drawing hero at Islamic rallies in Amman after his return from Afghanistan.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan had encouraged its rank and file to volunteer for fighting in Afghanistan, and claims that its followers worked with 'Azzam and mediated in the resolution of conflicts among Mujahidin factions. The "Afghans" who returned to Jordan helped create an extremist organization.

Algeria Is Major Battlefield

Algeria seems to be a major battlefield for returning Algerian "Afghans" who have carried out major operations in the past few months, according to well-informed Algerian and Western sources. They have concentrated their attacks on the military, police, and security personnel as well as police stations, army installations, and government agencies. They consider that their objective is "to weaken the state and change the regime" and consequently help the Islamic Salvation Front establish an Islamic Republic.

Those "Afghans" operate as small cells and are constantly on the move. Some of them reside in the Balcor area of the Algerian capital where the "Afghan"-frequented Kabul mosque is located. Others live in the countryside or in the mountains. Some say that the "Afghans" are "part" of the Salvation Front's military arm which remains under formation and is still at the stage of amassing weapons. However, informed Algerian sources believe that the "Afghans" are divided among themselves over their partisan affiliations. Some of them are close to the Salvation Front while others prefer organizations that are even more rigid and extreme.

The word "Afghan" has almost become a code-name in Algeria for acts of violence, assassinations, and explosions as the confrontation between the authorities and the Salvation Front escalates. The latest such act of violence was the murder of five Algerian policemen to the east of the capital city, by unknown armed perpetrators a few days after Boudiaf's assassination. It is rumored that the "Afghans" were behind that operation, which seems to fit their modus operandi, but this still remains to be formally proven.

Al-Tayyib al-Afghani is a living example of those elements. The bearded youth spent some four months in Peshawar. He and his activist friend 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Dahhan set about early last summer to form an armed group which has so far attracted more than 40 members, most of them of the Islamic Union. The group attacked the Qammar border patrol station near the Algerian-Tunisian border last 25 November. A number of soldiers were killed, a quantity of light arms was seized, and some of the attackers were apprehended. The operation triggered a strong reaction from security forces which neutralized al-Tayyib al-Afghani's group and arrested its leader who confessed on television that the objective of the operation was to secure arms in preparation for jihad on the basis of a Fatwah brought by his friend 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Dahhan shortly after his return from Yemen. Al-Dahhan was killed in the operation.

The "Afghans" followed al-Qammar operation with al-Qasabah operation which coincided with the imposition of martial law last February and claimed the lives of six policemen. Al-Qasabah was chosen because, as an ancient densely-populated native district, it provided dense cover for terrorist activity and had been a bulwark for revolutionaries in the Algerian capital during the revolution for independence. Security forces intervened harshly, killing some "Afghans" and apprehending the rest.

Al-Tayyib al-Afghani, currently incarcerated, is a 33-year-old of modest beginnings who dreamed of succeeding where Bouali failed. He previously worked as a taxi driver in Libya and as a smuggler, and generally lived a life of adventure. He went to Afghanistan in the early 1980s with some of his relatives then returned to Algeria in 1988 to join the Islamic Salvation Front at the time it became a legitimate party; however, legitimate political activity did not set well with al-Tayyib who now faces the death penalty.

Tunisia may be another country, observers fear, into which the "Afghans" may expand their extremist activities. The number of Tunisians who went to Afghanistan is unknown but they will likely flock to the Islamic Renaissance Movement which came into being in February of 1989 after it was banned in its first incarnation as the Islamic Direction Movement. Its leader, Rached al-Ghannouchi, protested in the Fall of 1989 that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali had reneged on a promise to legitimize the Movement, and initiated a string of strikes, incitements, and attacks, especially in the universities. The campaign of violence persisted, leading to the arrest of hundreds of Movement members and supporters. Should violence and terrorism return to Tunisia on a large scale, the "Afghans" would probably be to blame, and [they are certain] to play a role in leading the fight against the regime.

The "Afghans" have not formed a unified organization in the full sense of the word. Be they Algerian, Egyptian, Tunisian, or of some other nationality, what they have in common is their use of violence, arms, and explosives in

their attempt to realize their objectives and achieve their targets. They form underground organizations, manipulated pawns perhaps, in their quest for undermining stability in certain Arab countries.

Egyptian 'Afghans'

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pp 14-15

[Article: "Egyptian 'Afghans' Are Experienced in Guerilla Warfare and In Tactics of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard"]

[Text] The "Afghans", i.e. Egyptian members of Islamic groups that are returning from Afghanistan, are one of the most vexing problems facing Egyptian security agencies, even though they had the government's blessing when they left the country for Kabul.

Those "Afghans" would have faded in the background and been forgotten except that they were unmasked by chance in the course of inquests by State Security prosecutors in connection with case 564/90. This is the case involving the assassination of Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub and his bodyguards on October 1990. Mamduh 'Ali Yusif and Muhammad Ahmad al-Najjar, the two defendants, highlighted the gravity of the problem of Egyptians returning from Afghanistan by divulging information on their fighting skills, the quality of their field training, their capacity to carry out guerrilla warfare and manage explosives, and their desire to "diligently pursue their target until victory is at hand."

Some of those returnees did not even pause to catch their breath; they immediately commenced with confrontations. They orchestrated the assassination of Rif'at al-Mahjub, as well as attempts on the lives of journalist Makram Muhammad Ahmad and former ministers of the interior Zaki Badr, al-Nabawi Isma'il, and Hasan Abu Basha.

This string of activities by Islamic groups began in the early eighties when the Physicians Syndicate [Medical Association], controlled by members of the Islamic movement in Egypt, launched a government-sanctioned campaign to raise funds and recruit young physicians to travel to Afghanistan in medical caravans to treat the injured and to organize units for medical services. The drive was supervised by a group of parliament deputies and physician-members of the Muslim Brotherhood. The same elements are still active in the same drive, but this time through the International Relief Committee in support of the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The medical caravans took off. A large number of members of extremist religious organizations succeeded in leaving for Afghanistan by legitimate means. Once there, they showed their true colors, each according to his ideological affiliation. Some announced that they would continue the struggle in their own personal way in clandestine camps supervised by Mujahidin from the

Sudan, Iran, and Pakistan. Those Egyptians, according to government sources, received very significant training in five areas:

1. The development of a battle culture centered around the religious belief in "Islamic jihad and martyrdom in the service of God and Islam." That conviction became a fighting principle and an ideological mind-set.
2. The use of automatic weapons with which the Mujahidin were supplied. Though plain, those weapons were accurate and effective as well as easy to carry, disguise, and conceal.
3. Training in building and assembling state-of-the-art offensive and defensive bombs that would inflict the highest number of casualties on the other side. Because handling explosives is very risky, trainees had to become highly skilled in building and assembling these devices.
4. Advanced training in street and house-to-house guerrilla warfare. This calls for physically fit individuals who are skilled in self-defense and who are quick to move and hide as they carry out their field assignments. The problem with guerrilla warfare is that guerrilla fighters get acclimated to this type of warfare and are lacking in discipline as members of organized armies. Tremendous pressure and fear of sudden death give them a constant feeling of alarm and a need to hide and carry arms.
5. Those fighters are convinced that their target is "to topple one regime and install another" and that the only means available for that end is fighting, guerrilla warfare, and the use of arms.

Egyptian fighting units in Afghanistan refused to meld ideologically under the banner of the Muslim Brotherhood to which they owed their ability to lawfully travel abroad. Each unit insisted on raising the banner of the group with which it was affiliated, revealing their true colors for the first time. According to an Egyptian security official, some of those affiliations were:

1. The Muslim Brotherhood. In order not to burn all its bridges behind it, the Brotherhood insisted on participating in the struggle as pledged and in accordance with its covenant with the regime. Its members limited their activity to medical caravans, shunning the actual fighting. Furthermore, most of them returned lawfully and resumed their former careers.
2. Islamic Jihad. This is the most rigid of all religious organizations whose member activities in Kabul were characterized with violence. They participated in the fighting, engaged in guerrilla warfare, and seized the opportunity to acquire battle skills and amass as much information as possible through daily contact with Afghani Mujahidin.
3. Repudiation and Renunciation [al-Takfir wa-al-Hijrah]. Those are elements who previously emigrated, mostly to Yemen, Sudan, and Lebanon, after the 1977 execution of their leader Shukri Ahmad Mustafa. They were determined to fight in Afghanistan and found

in that war an opportunity to grow out of isolation and prove their worth. They refused to join the aforementioned groups.

4. Delivered from Fire. Those fugitives from court sentences and pending trials who found haven in the fighting, as well as an opportunity to acquire battle skills in preparation for their return and for their resumption of the string of assassinations which they had initiated with their attempts on the lives of Hasan Abu Basha, al-Nabawi Isma'il, and Makram Muhammad Ahmad.

In the Style of the Revolutionary Guard

These armed militias began to return to Egypt in mid-1989 in accordance with pre-planned patterns of entry and activity. Other precautionary instructions they received abroad included:

- avoid relatives and friends who are under constant security surveillance
- use forged travel documents
- always keep a valid passport and be ready to travel
- reside in obscure areas of farms, cemeteries, and new urban communities
- abandon the "official" fundamentalist look by being clean shaven and wearing street clothes.

Security agencies monitored the returning fundamentalists as they assumed under new names their new organizational structures and modus operandi. These 'Afghanis' presented security agencies with the following challenges in the period from 25 July 1989 to 12 December 1990:

- The headquarters of al-Jihad, one such organization, was uncovered in al-Jizah, yielding very important files documenting the fighting squads in Afghanistan and their identities. The raid also yielded forged papers and large quantities of arms, ammunition, and locally-made explosives. [Security forces] stumbled upon those quarters by pure chance when neighbors smelled escaping gas and notified the authorities. The police arrived to ward off a possible fire only to find this cache of documents, arms, and munitions. Security ambushes in the vicinity resulted in the killing of Dr. 'Ala' Muhyi-al-Din 'Ashur, Islamic Jihad's information chief and its number-two man after Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman. ['Ashur], who commanded fighting squads in Afghanistan, was killed 15 days after his return. The medical satchel he was carrying contained an automatic weapon along with a stethoscope, a blood pressure monitor, and other medical instruments.
- An attempt was made 16 December 1989 on the life of Gen. Zaki Badr, minister of the interior, using a car bomb. The attempt failed due to defects in the design or placement of the bomb.
- Bombing attempts were made on liquor stores and video clubs. Policemen were attacked and efforts were made to stir up sectarian strife by targeting Christian properties.

- Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub, speaker of the Egyptian parliament, and six bodyguards were assassinated the morning of 12 October 1990. The military arm of Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility and its members were arrested. Consequent inquests at the State Security Mansion yielded comprehensive information on the squadrons returning from Afghanistan, including their initial organizational structures and their plans to rely upon their background experience in the struggle and to adapt it to conditions in Egypt. Analysis of the military behavior of those returning from Afghanistan revealed that in their confrontations with the authorities and security forces, they employed such new methods as:

- Using booby-trapped cars in assassination attempts, as was the case involving Gen. Zaki Badr.
- Using motorcycles to carry out operations in the style of Iran's Revolutionary Guard. Examples were the attempted assassinations of Rif'at al-Mahjub, Col. Ahmad 'Ala', and writer Faraj Fudah.
- Using locally-made bombs packaged as booby-trapped food cans.
- Using threat letters to terrorize ideological opponents, telling them to desist or be assassinated.
- Creating fear and worry by announcing assassination targets ranging from government officials to public personalities, writers, artists, and men of letters.

Egyptian security officials estimate that 600 [Egyptians] served with the militias and forces that fought in Afghanistan. Of those, some 150 have already returned. The rest are still abroad, preparing to return when it suits them. The returnees have already contributed to and left their mark on current organizations. Examples:

1. Escalating violence and confrontations with security forces. This peaked in May and June at Imbabah, al-Fayyum, Assiut, and Qinah.
2. Amassing the largest possible caches of weapons, munitions, and explosives for use at the appropriate time.
3. Forming military wings capable of battle assignments related to political assassinations.
4. Robbing vaults and gold stores in order to secure the funds needed to buy weapons, ammunition, and motorcycles.

Even though returnees from Afghanistan are particularly disposed to creating riots in order to embarrass the regime, they are subject to internal and external problems that could frustrate their objectives. Such problems include:

- Intensified security operations in Upper Egypt which worry those still abroad that if they return they might be arrested and incarcerated.

- Continued isolation and hiding which might be exposed, thus hastening their arrest, segregation, or physical liquidation.
- Utilization of new security measures by the authorities to uncover the aliases of the returnees and the forged documents they use. The authorities have also succeeded in recruiting informers from among the returnees and other organizations, and have consequently been able to identify those elements as well as their arrival dates, their goals, and their plans for the future.
- Promulgation of the anti-terrorist bill in the next few months. This law holds particular horror for those groups that receive financial or ideological support from abroad. The proposed law mandates the death penalty for that crime and for consorting with foreign authorities.
- Prosecution of more than 100 members of Islamic organizations now on trial in more than 20 cases of extremism. The accused face sentences of imprisonment, hard labor, and death. Such sentences could break the back of their organizations, forcing them to fall in line or go underground indefinitely.

BANGLADESH

Zia Speech in 11 Aug No-Confidence Debate

92AS1527A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
16 Aug 92 p 3

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Following is the English rendering of the text of the winding up speech of Prime Minister and Leader of the House on the debate on no-confidence motion brought by the Opposition parties against the Cabinet in the early hours of August 11, reports BSS.

"Honourable Speaker, thank you through you let me extend my sincere thanks to all honourable members of the House. [sentence as published]

I shall begin my speech with the last question raised by the Leader of the Opposition. She said, "We have taught them democracy". It meant that she had taught democracy to the BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party]. A few days ago, she had said, she would teach democracy to the BNP. Now she has said that she had already taught democracy to the BNP.

Mr Speaker, the people of the country know the sample of their democracy. Our Deputy Leader had talked a lot about their democracy, so, I shall not repeat them. Only in one sentence, I would say that their's was a one-party democracy and one-party rule. We don't want to learn that democracy. We also don't want to teach that democracy to the people of the country. Rather, we have taught them democracy. I want to tell, it was Ziaur Rahman, who had introduced democracy in the country and

practiced it. That democracy was multi-party democracy, and it is that multiparty democracy under which you have contested the elections and entered the House. The multi-party democracy which had come to an end before 1975 and was lost. In place of multi-party democracy there was 'BAKSAL' [Bangladesh Awami Krishak Sromik League]. In meant, it was because Ziaur Rahman had provided an opportunity of presenting multi-party democracy, you could come here again in that name and we have taught you democracy.

Honourable Speaker, she (Leader of the Opposition) said that there was military dictatorship in the country for the last 15 years. She had committed a slight mistake. In fact it was not 15 years but there was military dictatorship in the country for the last 12 and a half years. The reason as you have seen there was 9 (nine) years at this end and three a half years on the other end. During those period people had no right to speak, there was no Freedom of the Press and people were picked up and tortured off and on.

There was secret killings and different kinds of forces were formed. That was why the military dictatorship lasted in the country for the 12 and a half years.

About the parliamentary democracy, the Leader of the Opposition said, "The Treasury Bench had protested against the bill we brought in the House for parliamentary democracy." It is totally untrue. We say, the Treasury Bench also brought a bill and it would not be possible to introduce parliamentary democracy without the cooperation of the Treasury Bench. The Treasury Bench had taken that initiative. The Treasury Bench brought the bill and through that we have unitedly introduced parliamentary democracy. So come and admit the truth. Unity is the most urgent need of the hour to sustain the parliamentary system rules and procedures that we have introduced. To foil that unity, the Opposition has been resorting to propaganda and falsehood at every moment against the government. As a result people are being misguided and confusion is being created in the country. If you speak so much for democracy, let us come forward and work unitedly. The people have given their mandate to the two parties including other parties for five years. That is why, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has initiated all kinds of processes to make democracy ever lasting and to give it an institutional shape. And in future, too, we shall continue our process.

The Leader of the Opposition has raised another point. She said, their politics was not power-oriented but people oriented. I want to say, the objective of those who do politics, should be people-oriented and not power oriented. But with deep sorrow, I want to say that in 1982 an autocratic government grabbed power overthrowing an elected government. Since then, we had waged movement to oust the autocrat. We have always said that till the fall of the autocrat, we won't participate in any elections under autocracy. All the time and in every speech we had said this. Newspapers had carried

many reports on this. If we scan newspapers, we could see that on March 19, 1986, she (Leader of Opposition) herself had said in Chittagong that those who would participate in elections under autocracy, would be treated as national traitors. What had happened after that?

After that, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had not joined hands with the autocrat for the greed of power and did not participate in elections. The BNP had not established itself as "national traitor".

So, after the speech of March 19, 1986, it had been proved as to who had become national traitors by joining hands with autocracy for the greed of power and sharing power.

She (Leader of the Opposition) also mentioned that people's outcry has been reflected in this no-confidence motion. I want to say that people had exercised their no-confidence motion in the elections. It was decided at that time as to whom they had accepted or whom they had discarded. The confidence and no-confidence of the people is reflected through elections. People had shown their confidence and no-confidence in the last elections. At that elections, some had contested in two seats, some in five seats and some in three seats. Many of the opposition members contested in the elections from two seats and won from both the seats. Mr Tofael Ahmed is sitting in front of me. He contested from two seats and won both of them. Mr Razzak also won from two seats. The verdict of the people were reflected there. We had seen the Leader of the Opposition contested from three seats but was defeated in two. Is this not the verdict of the people? Even after that she is the Leader of the Opposition.

The people had given their no-confidence motion on that day. At this stage, it was pointed out from the Opposition Bench that Ershad had won from five seats. Well, that was only in one place, in one district but not in the whole country. That should be understood Ershad did not dare contest the election from the entire Bangladesh, he chose only one district. On the other hand, we selected five districts in the whole of Bangladesh.

Mr Speaker, it was further said, that the reports of threat of kidnapping from schools, women trafficking and other were being published in different newspapers. Regarding this, our Home Affairs Minister explained as to who were doing such activities. He (Home Minister) said he would prove as to who were resorting to such activities. We shall certainly prove in the coming days as to who were out to create this anarchy and, undiscipline. In the meantime, many of them had been arrested. The children who were kidnapped had been recovered among with their kidnappers.

She (Leader of the Opposition) had asked about the use of Bangladesh children in camel races. We know as to when this incident took place. We have that report with US. The government, acting on this report, investigated the matter properly. We have seen what report was

published in newspapers there. But you did not mention that report. It was published in a newspaper that the people of the country, which was named in the report, had protested. It was said that the children were orphans. They were taken there and they (the people of that country) had taken the responsibility to reap up the children and the children were well there. If necessary anybody willing to see the children will be allowed to see them. It was published in the newspaper. We can give more information about it.

Honourable Speaker, it has been further said among the 330 members of parliament [Sangsad] ornaments of at least 10 members of parliament were snatched and a car of a minister was hijacked. We have said before and still want to say that the autocracy had clung to power for long nine years in the country and it had patronized terrorism, give shelter and indulgence to terrorists. Under such situation is it possible to stop hijacking overnight? Will everything be settled overnight? That is never possible. We have said of course there is some terrorism. Steps have been taken to check them and they will be checked. So we have never said that there is no hijacking but if the hijacking is given indulgence and hijackers are given shelter, hijacking will never be stopped. We can see some of them were here too at different times. We have seen there were charges of murder against many of them. That kind of people had taken shelter in many parties and become members of the party. So if the terrorists remain with that party, and if they commit terrorism, being the representative of the people, how terrorism could be stopped? So I would request the people not to extend any cooperation to them. I would request the honourable Leader of the Opposition if she has any member of that kind in her party she should hand them over to the law enforcing agencies. Then the country and people will be benefitted.

Honourable Speaker, she (Leader of the Opposition) said when Mr Mosharraf, who is present in the House, was attacked by the members of BNP while he was proceeding with an anti-terrorism procession. We want to say wherever there is an attack they could see only BNP there. If so, has the entire Bangladesh belonged to BNP?

That means the people of entire Bangladesh is depending on BNP. Does it not prove that? She said the terrorists are taking shelter in BNP, leaving their party. If it is said then I would say the terrorists who were expelled from BNP they had given shelter in their party. We have such evidences with us. We have such examples with us. So I want to say, Mr Mosharraf, terrorists were in your party. It will not be right to speak untruth and blame BNP and Chhatra Dal to cover up inner conflict and confusion of your party. Rather we want to say that the student community and student and organizations of Bangladesh have now realized that if any one practices real democracy, it is BNP. If anyone has established the right of the people it is BNP.

The students of the country are now talking about democracy and had waged movement against nine years

of autocracy and if anyone who had cooperated with them in their movement, it was the BNP.

For that reason, today there is all confidence and trust in the BNP. The Chhatra Dal of the BNP is winning landslide victories in the elections in colleges and universities and not only that, a few days ago, we have seen, the Vice President [VP] of CUCSU [Chittagong University Central Students Union?] had left their party. Because there is no democracy there. There is only terrorism and terrorists are being nurtured. For these reasons, the CUCSU VP had discarded his organization and joined the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal. Does it not prove that there is democracy in the Jatiyatabadi Dal as well as its front organizations. And it is for that democracy, the student community, the future of the nation, and those who will provide leadership in future have been rallying round under the banner of Jatiyatabadi Dal and joining it.

As a result of the overwhelming victory of the Jatiyatabadi Dal all over the country, they (Opposition) have lost their bearing. This is why after losing everything, they have today come here with a no-confidence motion against Bangladesh Nationalist Party. And that with whose cooperation? With those who were once autocrats. The students had shed their blood in the streets and suffered imprisonment against these autocrats.

You too know, Nur Hossain, Dipali Shaha, Zehad and many others. Now and in holding their hand with them (the autocrats) today you have come up with the no-confidence motion.

Is this the sample of democracy? Is it the tradition of struggle? Is this the upholding of the rights of the people?

So, today people would extend their confidence motion to a greater degree and in the future elections people would show their no-confidence to the opposition parties, because the opposition is only looking after opportunity. To them, the country is not above their party, nor the nation neither democracy.

Whenever they get a chance, they join their hands with autocracy. As they had joined hands with autocracy in 1986, in the same way again they joined hands with autocracy in 1992.

Honourable Speaker, one more point, there are many things and I admit that there are some truth in some of them. As for example, they said that mothers and sisters of our country were being smuggled to Pakistan for prostitution. I have no facts about the prostitute quarters but we know they are trafficked with them. We have them in newspapers.

These women traffickers have been rounded up at different places and many of them are now in jail. And many of those, who were in Pakistan jail, have been repatriated in the meantime. The process of repatriating them is continuing and that process is being carried out by the BNP government.

Honourable Speaker, another point was raised here, that the BNP is backing the Sarbahara Party at Madaripur and Shariatpur. They claimed that the people were suffering from insecurity. I want to say, Mr Speaker, there is no member of parliament belonging to the BNP in Madaripur and Shariatpur. So the BNP has less hold there. The BNP is very weak there. That was why we did not get any member of parliament at those places. The backing to the Sarbahara Party is being given by those who are strong there. The Sarbaharas are getting opportunity to carry out their activities from their (Opposition) shelter and backing.

Mr Speaker, it is said that the BNP government do not want to solution of the problems in Chittagong Hill Tracts. We want to say as to who had created problem in Chittagong Hill Tracts?

When Awami League came to power after independence, they had said at that time that all in Chittagong Hill Tracts are Bangalee. Everyone was by force made a Bangalee. Since then they started their protest.

We want to say there are people belonging to different religions, races and communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts. We want to uphold their religious identities. Our party wants the solution of the problems of Chittagong Hill Tracts. We have said they are not Bangalees, they are Bangladeshis. They are the citizens of Bangladesh. It is evident from this that we want the solution of the problems of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

They (Opposition) wanted a parliamentary committee formed. We want to say, our good intentions have been proved. We have constituted a committee. There is no such difference between a parliamentary committee and a committee with members of parliament. Because, if you undermine the members of parliament, it would be a mistake. That is why we have formed a committee with members of parliament.

In the mean time, you have seen some examples that the BNP government whole-heartedly wanted the solution of the problems in Chittagong Hill Tracts. And in the future, too, you would be able see more in this connection. Inshallah, the BNP government would be able to solve this problem and seeing this and because of they have faith and trust in the BNP government, they had in the mean time ceased fire and agreed to a dialogue. The confidence that they had biggest success is that they had agreed to sit with us for discussion/reposed in an elected government is the biggest achievement for the BNP government.

So once again, I want to cite the Chittagong Hill Tracts and say that though you, the opposition parties, are giving no-confidence, people are giving their confidence in us to a greater degree and they are continuing to repose their confidence in us.

Mr Speaker, later it was said that the government had brought the Rohingyas in the country. We don't know of any example where any country foreigners are invited

and kept inside the country. Perhaps it was something that belonged to them that they had such idea. The condition of the country after independence had reached such a situation. Everybody knows the dimension of indiscipline and anarchy which gripped the country till 1975. At that time there was nothing like a government.

She (Leader of Opposition) said at that time we had no police, no army and there was no people to run the administration. Even she said none could go beyond the post of Colonel excepting MAG Osmani. I want to say she might not have all the information or she had wrong information.

General Wasiuddin was a Major General at that time. In the later stage, Mr Ishkandar Karim was a Brigadier. Mr Majid-Ul Huq who is sitting beside us, was a Brigadier at that time.

Mr Khalilur Rahman who could not become a member of parliament this time but is a member of your party, was promoted to the post of Brigadier, while he was in Pakistan during the war of liberation. So there were many people.

And it was seen that this army was made a cypher. They had no arms, no boots, no food and no rations. Nothing was done for them (army). By making the army totally ineffective, a private force was raised. What for Lal Bahini, Nil Bahini and another Rakkhi Bahini were formed and people today wanted to know as to who were they.

The issue of Rohingya is being raised here. Our Foreign Minister had spoken about the Rohingya issue. I don't want to go in to details in this regard.

She (Leader of the Opposition) said that huge quantities of relief goods are being misappropriated there. I would call upon the Leader of the Opposition to visit the Rohingya camps and see for herself as to how relief goods are being distributed there.

There are different non-government organizations and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The government officials are also there. They are working round the clock and the Rohingyas are getting relief and assistance. This is not our own words. Even foreigners have said it. If you go, they would also tell you. Though you have not said this in the House. Speaking the truth in the House would at least enhance the dignity of the Sangsad. The Sangsad could be strengthened. But you have avoided that. Even the foreigners have said, "the way you have kept the refugees and the way they are being helped, it is an example, an instance. Non can do such things so quickly and in such a manner.

There is no instance of misappropriation of relief goods by the BNP.

In the past, she (Leader of Opposition) had said huge quantities of relief goods had arrived in the country after the April 29 devastating cyclone and alleged that those relief goods were misappropriated. I want to say huge

quantities of relief goods were received and distributed among the distressed people. We have that example. Reports were published in newspapers at home and abroad that for the first time there was no incident of misappropriation of relief goods. Relief goods reached the distressed people and their doorsteps. We have this example. So you will have to understand that we have no example of theft of relief goods.

After independence, huge quantities of relief goods and assistance came into Bangladesh—had those relief and assistance been distributed properly, there would not have been the serious famine that broke out in 1974, and the devastated Bangladesh could have been rebuilt. But instead of that those relief goods were looted and stolen under the very nose of the people.

I want to recall with honor that the respected Prime Minister Majibur Rahman Sahib, himself had said "Where is my blanket"? Where may blanket has gone"? There was supply of blankets for all but he (Mujib) had not received his.

So, we have no example of misappropriation of relief goods. Rather those who have it constantly lurks in their mind and they speak in that fashion and try to put blame on others.

At a later stage, it was said that conspiracies are being hatched to push out the Rohingya refugees. We want only to say that we have told the Rohingya refugees that we would not want to send them back against their will.

Rather, they are being looked after by all means and when the situation will really turn normal and when we deem it fit that they would be able to stay in their own country with security, the refugees will only then return home.

I want to say, they will of course go back to their country. Because they are citizens of that country, they are citizens of Myanmar (Burma) they will go back to their country and we are continuing the process.

Honourable Speaker, they say BNP is only arresting and arresting especially their party workers. I will again say all whoever are terrorists and indulge in wrong doing, in crime, and evil will be arrested. If the workers of her party commit crimes, resort to terrorism, indulge in evil, they will certainly be arrested. Again, if any worker of BNP commits crime that worker will also be arrested. There are instances where many of the BNP workers are now in jail.

Honourable Speaker, it has been said here that Mr Sattar Had gone to elections as the candidate of Ershad. We want to say why had Ershad ousted Sattar if he was candidate of Ershad? That is a big question. But we had seen Mr Sattar gone for elections and opposition parties also participated in the elections. There was competition in the elections and BNP emerged victorious by a massive margin of votes. After that the intrigue and conspiracy had started. Some of the examples of the

intrigue had been cited from a newspaper by our Honourable Deputy Leader. They at that time welcomed martial law, killers and democracy. Even we have heard that when someone was questioned what was your opinion on promulgating martial law overthrowing an elected government?

Some of them replied "I am not unhappy"—which means she is not unhappy but she is happy. Does it not prove that many had alliance with the autocracy. The word came from BBC. The interview with BBC was that Mr Sattar was overthrown because of the corruption of BNP. The autocrat will say so. Because they need an issue. It was natural for them to say so they did not have any 53 issue other than this.

But we could see if the BNP had indulged in corruption, harmed the country's interest and failed to work for the welfare of the country, would people have voted BNP into power again? Would BNP be elected for the third time? The Jatiya Party member Mr Maudud Ahmed said once dislodged from power one can come back to power in the third world. BNP has come back to power twice. Does it not prove that BNP has popularity among the people? The BNP has established this example in the world. So it has to be understood how much popular is BNP among the People. It was on that logic many of them said BNP will not get more than ten seats. They said it after computing. Whereas BNP is there all over the country, the government of BNP was in power till 1981 and it was said that BNP would get 10 seats only and Jamaat-e-Islami would get more seats than the BNP. Does it not prove who had more friendship with whom? They had high hopes of forming a government. So we have always emphatically said we will go for elections under a neutral government. We had taken the stand as the verdict of the people would not have been reflected unless there is a neutral government and at last we have become, victorious in the elections with the people's votes.

Those, who had hopes (all have hopes) that they would form the government and so would be ministers. They had already formed the cabinet. When all their hopes were shattered, when they could not form the government, they said we will not let BNP remain in peace and free from worry even for a minute.

Because of this, today there is terrorism, undiscipline, anarchy, loot, hijack, toll collection. Do these not prove they will not let BNP remain in power in peace and who are giving support to efforts of not letting BNP rule in peace. But we want to say these are temporary.

Aid to Bosnia, UN Move Welcomed

Relief Contribution

92AS1529A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
16 Aug 92 p 1

[Text] Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has announced token humanitarian relief for the distressed people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The relief materials like tea and medicines would be despatched as a gesture from Bangladesh for those people, a Foreign Office spokesman told BSS here yesterday.

The relief would be set at the earliest, he said.

The relief contribution of the country symbolizes Dhaka's solidarity with the miserable plight of the distressed people in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

UN Resolution Welcomed

92AS1529B Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
16 Aug 92 pp 1, 8

[Text] Bangladesh fully supports the United Nations Security Council Resolution on the use of military force. If needed, to provide humanitarian aid to civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, including detainees camps and jails, a Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday, reports BSS.

Dhaka also supports the other Security Council resolution which strongly condemns "ethnic cleansing" in what was Yugoslavia and urges authorities to end all human rights violations, he said.

The spokesman said Bangladesh has cosponsored a call for extraordinary session of the Human Rights Commission to Consider the question of human rights violation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Security Council Friday adopted two resolutions on the latest situation in the Bosnia-Herzegovina imbroglio.

Any military action would take place "in coordination with the United Nations" but would not involve the UN peace-keepers in the Sarajevo airport, said the Resolution 770 adopted a margin of 12 votes in favor—none against their abstaining.

The Resolution 771 on "ethnic cleansing" was adopted as the Serb forces in Bosnia have been continually at risk.

"It will require a very large force that would have to use violence to stop the violence, and that inevitably means the death of innocent civilians," he told a Senate committee.

During the same hearing, a top aide to Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Colin Powell estimated that between 60,000 and 120,000 troops would be needed to protect convoys carrying relief supplies 350 kilometers overland to Sarajevo from the Croatian port of Split.

To impose a ceasefire would require 400,000 troops, General Barry McCaffrey told lawmakers.

An approach limited solely to air strikes as been rejected amid questions of its effectiveness.

The Yugoslav conflict comes at an inopportune moment for the Defense Department, which is facing dramatic budget cutbacks.

Paper Reports Foreign Minister's Paris Visit

92AS1544A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
30 Jul 92 pp 1, 8

[Text] Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman has said in Paris that the democratic government of Bangladesh under the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had taken steps to give democracy an institutional shape.

During a meeting with his French counterpart Roland Dumas last night, Mr. Rahman said the democratic government had provided a new orientation in the field of foreign relations as well as major domestic issues. He mentioned the priorities fixed by Begum Zia's government in development activities in Bangladesh. Mr. Rahman is now on a three-day official visit to France.

Welcoming the Foreign Minister, Mr. Dumas said France would continue to provide assistance to Bangladesh for its economic development and at the same time diversify the areas of cooperation between the two countries.

Both the ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and agreed to adopt measures to strengthen the existing ties for mutual benefit of the two peoples, officials said.

Mr. Dumas said the visit had provided an opportunity to establish high level political contact between the two countries after the democratic transition in Bangladesh. He appreciated the efforts taken by Bangladesh for repatriation of Myanmar refugees and reiterated French support in this regard.

The French Foreign Minister suggested the involvement of United Nations for confidence building among the refugees and at the same time putting international pressure on the Myanmar authorities for taking back the refugees. In this connection, Mr. Rahman expressed thanks to Mr. Dumas on behalf of Bangladesh government for the leading role taken by France at the U.N. Human Rights Commission.

Reiterating the importance that Bangladesh attached to its relations with France, Mr. Rahman recalled the role played by French President Francois Mitterrand in mobilising international support for the Flood Action Plan (FAP) for Bangladesh. He also briefed the French Foreign Minister about the progress in the implementation of the plan in the light of decisions taken at the last review meeting. Mentioning the positive role and contribution of France in the last Aid Consortium meeting in Paris, Mr. Rahman thanked the French government for providing debt relief up to 1988 and the decision to extend grants instead of grants and loans from 1991 onward.

Both the ministers agreed that there should be more exchanges between the two countries and expressed satisfaction at the growing cultural exchanges and expanding trade relations. Mr. Rahman also briefed the

French Minister about the regional cooperation among the South Asian countries in the framework of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation]. Mr. Dumas accepted an invitation extended to him by the Foreign Minister to visit Bangladesh and indicated that the visit may take place at a date later this year.

Private investment

Mostafizur Rahman yesterday urged the French entrepreneurs to explore the possibilities of investment in Bangladesh.

The new industrial policy of Bangladesh provides considerable fiscal incentives and facilities for foreign investors in the export processing zones of the country. Mr. Rahman said while speaking at a dinner hosted in his honour by French Minister for Health and Humanitarian Action Bernard Kouchner in Paris last night.

He said with the restoration of democracy, a congenial atmosphere had been created for foreign private investment in Bangladesh.

The Foreign Minister said a people's government under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia, after taking over the administration of the country, had assumed the difficult task of setting things to right.

The continuity in our development efforts had too often been broken by political instability and the situation works ended because of about a decade of mismanagement by the past autocratic and corrupt regime, he said.

Bernard Schreiner, president of Bangladesh-France Parliamentary Friendship Group, aides to President Mitterrand, Foreign Affairs Adviser to Prime Minister Pierre Berezgiovoy, admiral Coatane of French Navy, senior officials of the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Finance, eminent personalities, industrialists and members of the business community, academics, NGO [Non-Government Organization] representatives and journalists attended the dinner held at Banquet Hall of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Additional Foreign Secretary A.H. Mahmood Ali, Bangladesh Ambassador to France, K.M. Shehabuddin and others accompanying the Foreign Minister also attended the dinner.

On the bilateral relations, Mr. Rahman said the people of Bangladesh held the French leadership and the people of France in high esteem not only because they had responded to their difficulties at times of crises and catastrophes, but also for continued interest in the well-being and prosperity of Bangladesh.

Leader of Bangladesh Communist Party Killed**Protest Rally**

92AS1542A Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
5 Aug 92 p 8

[Text] Leading politicians from different parties had reiterated the demand for immediate ban on the politics of the Jamaat and other anti-liberation forces to maintain a congenial atmosphere in the political arena.

The demand was made at a rally organised by the central committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) to protest the killing of its elderly leader Ratan Sen.

The rally held in front of the CPB office in the metropolis yesterday afternoon was presided over by party chief Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and addressed by Awami League leader Abdul Mannan, Pankaj Bahttacharya of the NAP [National Awami Party], Muhammad Afzal of the Ganatantri Party, Rashed Khan Menon of the Workers Party and Nurul Islam Nahid, Shamsuddoha and Maniruzzaman of the CPB.

A large number of workers and supporters from different corners of the city in several pitched processions attended the meeting to register their protest over the killing.

The rally over a huge process was brought out in the city. Speakers at the rally blamed the Jamaat Shibir activists for resorting to violence to eliminate what they termed pro-liberation forces. They strongly condemned the killing of Ratan Sen saying that the murder was designed to destabilise the constitutional politics in the country. They also accused the government of its failure to protect the safety and security of the people living in the metropolis and in the remote areas. The law and order situation nation has alarmingly worsened all over the country causing great agony to the common man, the speaker alleged.

Referring to the day-light murder of Ratan Sen in Khulna metropolis on Friday last the leaders held the militant groups of the Jamaat responsible for this tragic incident.

The present government will have to bear consequences if it fails to flush out terrorism and violence from the political area, the speakers warned. They blasted the government for its role in dealing with anti-liberation elements and said the government had virtually forged a compromise with the Jamaat Shibir lobby in a bid to cling to power.

In this context, the speakers underscored the urgency for a greater unity of all liberation and progressive forces to resist the fundamentalist who were out to undermine the values and spirit of the war of independence.

Meanwhile, our Khulna correspondent adds that the local unit of (CPB) termed the murder of Ratan Sen part

of a conspiracy to eliminate freedom fighters and pro-liberation political figures. It was a planned murder, the local unit observed.

Jamaat Denial

92AS1542B Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 7 Aug 92 p 10

[Text] Jamaat-e-Islami acting Ameer Mr. Abbas Ali Khan and Secretary General Moulana Motiur Rahman Nizami in a joint statement on Thursday refuted the allegation by left parties against Jamaat for the killing of CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh] leader Ratan Sen in Khulna.

They condemned the continued "false and motivated propaganda" by CPB and five-party alliance involving the name of Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir in the killing of Ratan Sen. They pointed out that the two persons arrested by police confessed that they killed Ratan Sen for money. They said that the allegations of CPB and five-party alliance against Jamaat even after the confession of the arrested persons were not only "false but irresponsible."

They said that the government should find out the killers of Ratan Sen and place them before the nation to remove any confusion.

Debate on Law and Order Situation Lauded

92AS1543A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 2 Aug 92 p 5

[Editorial—"The Need And Message of The Hour"]

[Text] The walkout by the opposition during the debate in Parliament on law and order Wednesday notwithstanding, the heartening feature is that perhaps for the first time in Parliamentary debate on such vital national issues both government and opposition seemed equally involved with the law and order situation as it obtains now in the country. There was an obvious convergence of views not only on the gravity of the situation but also on the overall approach to be made to this problem.

What has emerged from Wednesday's heated debate on the subject as well as from the proceedings in earlier sessions is that the challenge is one which would be almost impossible to face unless opposition and government join forces in this war on crime. Government has on more than one occasion publicly sought this kind of co-operation from the opposition, but one may have had doubts how far it seriously meant it and the opposition also seems to have not taken it seriously. This may have been taken as part of the routine parliamentary polemics.

If we are not mistaken time has come for eschewing the traditional confrontation stand between government and opposition, (government and opposition crossing swords

in parliamentary debate, though, a routine practice). Co-operation instead is the irreducible need of the moment.

Suggestions in many forms have been offered by the opposition members taking part in the debate towards tackling the problem. They include, among others, (1) reforms and corrective steps to restore discipline in the police force, (2) disciplinary action against corruption in police services (this could be preferably under the auspices of a judicial commission), (3) constituting a joint parliamentary committee comprising leading government and opposition members. One of the points made by the opposition is de-politicising the police. This is what represents perhaps the very core of the problem of law and order in this country: not only do the police but practically all public and private institutions, mills and factories, universities, colleges and even schools not least segments of the bureaucracy sorely need depoliticising. Certainly the opposition has to assume its share of the task of depoliticisation. And once both government and opposition bring themselves to see eye to eye on the need to work together on this problem of ridding these institutions of politics and therefore of the spate of violence that it has led to spectacular results are bound to follow. The supreme need therefore is a joint venture by government and opposition to overcome this number one problem of the country.

If, instead, time is spent, both in parliament and outside, on launching charges and counter-charges (which is what has been the routine political pastime over the past years and for the past regimes) there is no hope for the situation to be turned around and for the country to be saved. The situation is really that desperate and national leadership as a whole (those in position and opposition) has to answer for it.

The latest trend in academic violence is that colleges are closing one after another (Khulna, Daulatpur College and Barguna College, e.g. among others). Schools are already astir under the wave of violence spreading like a wild fire and doing so, mind you, along the same political lines. While you tell the truth—and we praise you that you do—at long last, about the damage violence set off by political rivalries has done it is your moral, social and political obligation to adopt the right means of containing it. The challenge calls for a national summit of the leaders (both elders and youngsters) to find an effective way to meet it. Side by side with political violence general crime also has developed an unusually violent dimension.

Time therefore for consensus and co-operation on this issue in particular—as well as on a few others that relate to the vital interest of the nation for the present as well as for the future. We believe, given the necessary will on the part both of government and opposition a good deal yet can be done to rein in these anti-social forces that are tearing up the very fabric of society.

One thing both government and opposition ought to pay heed to is the implicit message delivered by the situation: the whirlwind that has started blowing from the wind on over the years, with its newly acquired momentum, may sweep everything before it.

Workers Party Leader Attacked; Reaction

Suspects Arrested

92AS1526A Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 19 Aug 92 pp 1, 10

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Two persons suspected to be involved in the armed attack on Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon, MP [member of Parliament], have been arrested by the police, according to a Press note issued by the Home Ministry in Dhaka Tuesday, says BSS.

The Press Note said the Government has taken all-out measures immediately to arrest the miscreants associated with the barbaric and heinous attack on Mr Menon.

Meanwhile, centering the attack on Mr Menon, some interested quarters circulated an unfounded and unfortunate rumor about his 'Menon' death at different places of the country including the Dhaka city since morning. As a result, some unruly people and interested quarters set ablaze four cars and damaged some others in different areas in the capital. They also indulged in disrupting public life. With the timely intervention of the police, the situation became normal quickly. The situation was now under control, the Press Note added.

The Government expressed the hope that the concerned quarters would refrain from disrupting public life and damaging the properties of the Government by circulating false and baseless rumor. The Government has taken all steps to maintain law and order in the country and ensure the security of the people's property, the Press Note said.

Seeking the cooperation of all sections of people, irrespective of party affiliations, to maintain peace and discipline in the country, the Government said in unequivocal terms that any attempt to create law and order situation, perpetrate terrorist activities, disrupt public security and economic activities and creating situation leading to confusion in public life would be curbed with an iron hand.

The Press Note said, Mr Rashed Khan Menon MP, General Secretary of Bangladesh Workers Party, was critically wounded when unidentified gunmen shot at him in front of the Workers Party Office at Topkhana Road around 8:30 p.m. (Monday).

Immediately after the incident, he was first taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and then to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH). At the CMH, a team of

the country's leading surgeons carried out successful operation lasting four hours on him.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia went to see Mr Menon at the CMH last night and enquired about his welfare. The Prime Minister issued instruction to call in the country's best surgeons and specialists and taken all possible measures for his treatment.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Speaker Shaikh Razzaque Ali, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Information Minister Barrister Najmul Huda, other members of the cabinet, Awami League chief and leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina, some MPs, leaders of different political parties, distinguished personalities and relatives of Mr Menon went to the CMH last night and enquired about his welfare.

Mr Menon has now been kept in the intensive care unit. A team of doctors led by Maj Gen Abdul Mohaimen and Maj Gen Anis Waiz have been taking care of him round the clock. He is improving steadily, the Press Note said.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia again visited Mr Menon this morning, Mr Menon talked to the members of his family when they visited him Tuesday afternoon.

Workers Party; Others React

92AS1526B Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 19 Aug 92 pp 1, 10

[Text] Different political parties, alliances, students organizations, trade unions, human rights bodies, lawyers associations and individuals continued to condemn the heinous and dastardly attempt on the life of the General Secretary of the Workers Party, Mr Rashed Khan Menon MP [member of Parliament] on Tuesday.

The politburo of the Workers Party in a Press statement on Tuesday said that the attempt to assassinate Mr Menon was pre-planned. The press release said that Jamaat in connivance with Shibir and Juba Command hired hoodlums and gunmen who fired at Mr Menon giving prior threat to kill him (Menon).

The Press release asserted that Jamaat-Shibir-Juba Command also prepared a list to eliminate the pro-liberation of political leaders. The polit-bureau observed that the law enforcing agencies were aware of the activities of the musclemen and hoodlums of Jamaat-Shibir-Juba Command.

The Press release claimed that police could arrest those professional killers within 24 hours if raid was conducted properly. The press release criticized the Home Minister for his statement about the improved law and order situation. The polit-bureau called upon all to observe dawn to dusk hartal on Thursday to create resistance against all sorts of armed terrorism and violence.

Justice Kemaluddin

Mr Justice Kemaluddin Hussain and Advocate Sigma Huda, President and Secretary General respectively of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) in a Press statement on Tuesday expressed their deep concern and resentment over the attack on the Workers Party leader Mr Rashed Khan Menon.

They termed this incident as severe blow on the human rights as well as on the democracy. They called upon people from all strata of the society to come forward to resist the terrorism.

They demanded of the Government to take legal action against the culprits responsible of this act.

Kazi Aref Ahmed and Mr Hasaul Huq Inu, a member of the Presidium and General Secretary respectively of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal in a joint statement condemned and protested the attempt on the life of Mr Menon.

They termed this incident as part of the blue print of the anti-liberation forces to kill the progressive leaders and workers.

Besides, the following political leaders and other organization also issued statements on Tuesday condemning the dastardly attack on Mr Rashed Khan Menon, MP.

Mr Alamgir Majumder and Mr Md Azizul Huq, President and General secretary respectively of National Workers Party, Mr Shawkat Hossain Nilu and Mr A.T.M. Golam Mowla Choudhury, Chairman and Secretary General respectively of Progressive Nationalist Party, Shah Abu Zafar and Mr M.A. Gafur, President and General Secretary respectively of Jatiya Sramik Party, Sramik Krishak Samajbadi Dal of Dhaka city unit, Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Mukti Andolon, Mr Faez Ahmed, President of Sammeleta Sanskritik Jote, Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jelee Dal, the Chairman of Bangladesh Janata Dal Mr K.M. Obaidur Rahman, Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Dal, Bangladesh Chhatra Dal, Bangladesh Khelafat Antolon, Col (retr) Syed Faruqur Rahman, Chairman of Freedom Party, National Democratic Party, Bangladesh Inqilab Party, Bangladesh Muslim League, Jatiya Ainjibi Parishad, Colonel Taher Sangsad, Bangladesh Juba Shakti, Mujahidul Islam Party, Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangshad, Mr Mosharraf Hossain and Mr Bazlur Rahman Milon, President and Secretary General respectively of Press Workers Federation, Bangladesh Chhatra League, Anupam Roy, Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree, All-Party Students Unity, Dhaka City Corporation Contractors Association, Federation of Bangladesh Shop Owners Association, Progressive Writers Movement, Bangladesh Radio-Television Artists Association, Bangladesh Law Students' Federation, Jatiya Patkal Sramik Karmachari Federation, Krishak Sramik Party.

Bangladesh Gano Azadi League, Bangladesh National Awami Party, Bangladesh Socialist Party, Bangladesh

National Democratic Party, Bangladesh Smajantrik Dal, Dhaka City Mahila Awami League, Mr Mahfuzur Rahman and Al-Haj Sharifuddin, Chairman and Publicity Secretary respectively of the Central Command Council of Bangladesh Mukti Joddha Sangsad, National Coordination Committee for the Elimination of Killers and Collaborators of 1971 and Implementation of the Spirit of Liberation War, Dhaka University Zia Parishad, Mr B.M. Nazmul Huq and Mr Abu Naser Md Rahmatullah Tarun, the Central President and Secretary respectively of Jatiya Juba Command, JAGPA [Jatiya Gonotantrik Party], Bangladesh Medical Association, Dhaka University Teachers Association, and United Front Teachers Association of Bangladesh.

DUCSU [Dhaka University Central Student Union]

Varsity Correspondent adds: DUCSU V-P [Vice President] Amanullah Aman MP and General Secretary Khairul Kabir Khokan in a joint statement on Tuesday strongly condemned the attempt on life of Rashed Khan Menon and demanded arrest and punishment to those responsible for such heinous act.

The DUCSU leaders in their statement termed the attack on the life of Rashed Khan as conspiracy against the democratic government and said such planned attack is launched to frustrate the new born democracy.

They prayed for immediate recovery of Rashed Khan Menon.

Bangladesh Chhatra League (K-I), Chhatra League (M-S), Chhatra Federation and four student organizations in separate statement protested the armed attack on Rashed Khan Menon and demanded punishment of the culprits.

Bangladesh Islamic Chhatra Shibir (BICS) in a statement also condemned the attack on Rashed Khan Menon and demanded punishment to the persons responsible for the incident.

Rumor Incites Violence

92AS1526C Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER
in English 19 Aug 92 pp 1, 10

[Text] A series of incidents of bomb blasts, firing, damaging of vehicles, street corner meetings and demonstrations took place in the city on Tuesday in protest against the attempt on the life of Workers Party General Secretary and Five-Party Alliance leader Mr Rashed Khan Menon.

Heavy contingents of riot police were deployed at Topkhana area and other vintage points of the city on the day. BDR [Bangladesh Rifles] personnel also patrolled the city streets since morning on the day.

A rumor on the death of Mr Rashed Khan Menon at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in the morning led

to violent reactions by his partymen and the followers of the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikkya—student front of the Five-Party Alliance.

At least 50 vehicles were damaged at Topkhana Road, Gulistan Motijheel, Kakrail, Mauchak, Malibag, Zero Point, Paltan, New Market area and Dhaka University area.

Four cars and two micro-buses were set on fire by the angry supporters of the Five-Party Alliance in front of National Press Club, Baitul Mokarram, Zero Point and in front of GPO [General Post Office].

Violence spread to Tokhana, Baitul Mokarram and Gulistan and Motijheel areas following the rumor of his death. People in the busy commercial areas at Motijheel left their offices before noon and took their vehicles for safety which led to total dislocation of traffic system creating jam in different parts of the city for hours. Shop owners in the busy areas pulled down their shutters in panic.

A number of processions were organized by Workers Party, Five-Party Alliance and Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikkya. The processionists changed anti-Government slogans and demanded punishment by the gunmen of Jamaat-Shibir, Freedom Party and Jubo Command whom they charged with trying to kill Mr Rashed Khan Menon.

Supporters and sympathizers of the Five-Party Alliance leader thronged his Workers Party office at Topkhana Road to enquire about his condition at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where he was operated upon on Tuesday midnight.

The Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikkya held a protest rally in front of the National Press Club in the morning. The Five-Party Alliance held its protest rally in front of GPO in the afternoon. The speakers at both the rallies blamed Jamaat-Shibir, Freedom Party and Jubo Command forces for the attempt on the life of Mr Menon as a part of their conspiracy against the pro-liberation forces. They condemned the failure of the present Government for ensuring security to life and properties.

Police fired tear gas shells to disperse a procession of the Five-Party Alliance at Topkhana Road in the evening.

A bomb explosion near the CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh] office in the evening after the protest rally of the Five-Party Alliance created panic in the area.

Innumerable telephone calls were received by newspaper offices and at the national Press Club following the rumor of death of Mr Menon.

Chittagong

Reports from our Chittagong office says: Several thousand people in the Port City went on rampage following spread of a rumor of death of Mr Rashed Khan Menon.

The unruly people damaged at least 30 shops at Darul Fazal Market, New Market area, Nandan Kanon, Buddhist Temple Road, Andarkillah and Jubilee Road. Some shops were looted too, police said.

Over a dozen automobiles were damaged by a frenzied mob at New Market area. The South District BNP office at Dost Building near New Market was also attacked by some unruly people.

Islami Chhaqtra Shibir (ICS) office at Nalapara was also ransacked by the mob.

'Political Terrorism'

92AS1526D Dhaka *THE NEW NATION* in English
19 Aug 92 p 5

[Editorial]

[Text] The attempt on the life of a good man and sober politician Rashed Khan Menon who bore no ill-will towards his political colleagues and detractors alike, across the board, far less wanted any harm done them, has been as outrageous as it is unthinkable. It is because of his sterling qualities of head and heart that he has been an asset of a bridge between major contending political forces in the country. No wonder he is looked upon as one of the few trouble-shooters in the political arena today. It is inexplicable how he could be a target of a pre-meditated and audacious attack.

Menon has been receiving threats on his life for some time past, so it has been reported. Thus the investigations, set in motion in the aftermath of a seeming conversion of one of those challenges to his security into a fact, should aim at fathoming the depths to which political vendetta has sunk. There is a suggestion in a section of the press that some underground forces from his constituency could have some grudge against him. Those close to him should know. Political terrorism of a type that singles out leaders, add as it does a growing new dimension to the other known forms of a declining law and order situation, has to be overcome. Because it poses a challenge to the working of democracy which depends on pursuit of differing political ideals.

It is necessary for the political party offices to have a modicum of security arrangement of their own. Quite importantly, however, police or surveillance posse should be intelligently located near some party offices. Both the above measures are conventional elsewhere in the world. It is time we thought of a little bit larger but selective protection for the politicians.

What is regrettable is, whereas we ought to quietly pray for the speedy recovery of a grievously wounded politician, we let loose our rage violently. The rumor-induced demonstrations that went berserk yesterday leading to smashing or snuffing out of vehicles of innocent people were tantamount to playing into the hands of those who want harm done to the country or aim at destabilizing our policy or society.

Everything necessary has been done at the CMH where the best surgeons had performed painstakingly to save Rashed Khan Menon's life from the jaw of death. His condition is said to be stabilizing, and we join the nation in wishing him a speedy recovery.

'Unbiased' Bengali Newspaper Makes Debut

92AS1525A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 2 Aug 92 p 10

[Text] A new Bengali daily, the "Banglabazar Patrika", hit the stands on Saturday, reports BSS.

The debut of the newspaper brings yet another addition to an area already galore with dailies.

But the Editor of the daily Matiur Rahman Chowdhury promised "innovative" journalism and assured the readers of a daily with a "difference".

A function, marking the launching of the daily, was organized at Bahadur Shah Park—the venue itself is somewhat unusual for such occasions.

Mr Chowdhury, a well-known columnist and a correspondent for two decades, said this symbolized the "difference" that the daily promised to offer to the nation.

Elder journalist Mohammad Nasiruddin, whose long career as a writer and journalist had made him almost a legend in the field, was the chief guest at the function.

Attempts to control newspaper freedom seldom served any noble purpose, Mohammad Nasiruddin said and urged the newsmen to follow the ethics of fairness in journalism without any bias.

Editor Matiur Rahman Chowdhury said the new daily has no "bias" and its policy would revolve around the "truth".

"We are faced with the truth everyday"—is the avowed slogan of the daily.

Describing the choice of the name of the newspaper, he said that "Banglabazar" area in the capital bore the tradition of being the origin of printing industry of the country and this history had been reflected through this.

Mr Taher, Secretary General of the Bangladesh Book Printers and Seller Association, presided over the function.

Public-Sector Jute Mills Loss Announced

92AS1528A Dhaka *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*
in English 26 Jul 92 p 10

[Text] Thirty eight jute mills in the public sector incurred a loss of Taka 370.86 crore in 1989-90 and Taka 247.32 crore in 1990-91.

This was disclosed in the Parliament by Jute Minister Brig (Rtd) Hannan Shah in reply to a question on Saturday.

The Jute Minister told the House that a report had been compiled on the jute sector with the EEC assistance and he said that a master plan would be taken with the World Bank support to develop the jute sector.

In reply to another question the Jute Minister said that Adamjee Jute Mills incurred a loss of Taka 81.84 crore in 11 months during 1991-92 fiscal year. He informed that the total number of employees in Adamjee Jute Mills was now 21,528 of whom 14,956 were regular staff. About Taka 60.67 crore were spent to pay salary and allowances to officials and workers of Adamjee Jute Mills in 11 months during the last fiscal year, he added.

Withdrawal of EPC Under Study

A UNB report says: The government is actively considering withdrawal of export price check (EPC) on raw jute in view of export shortfall during the last financial year.

Jute export in 1991-92 is estimated at 15.33 lakh bales as against the target of 18 lakh bales.

Bangladesh Jute Association (BJA) sources said the target could not be achieved due to the export price restriction.

Trade delegation from Pakistan that visited Dhaka recently had discussion with the Jute Minister about the disadvantages of EPC and suggested its withdrawal. Pakistan is one of the largest buyers of raw jute from Bangladesh.

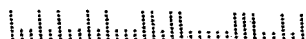
BJA sources said export sales of more than six lakh bales of jute were registered in four months from August to November 1991 when EPC was not in force.

Official sources said EPC committee is expected to take a decision shortly on withdrawal of export price restriction. The issue was also learnt to have been discussed in BNP [Bangladesh Nationalist Party] parliamentary party meeting recently.

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